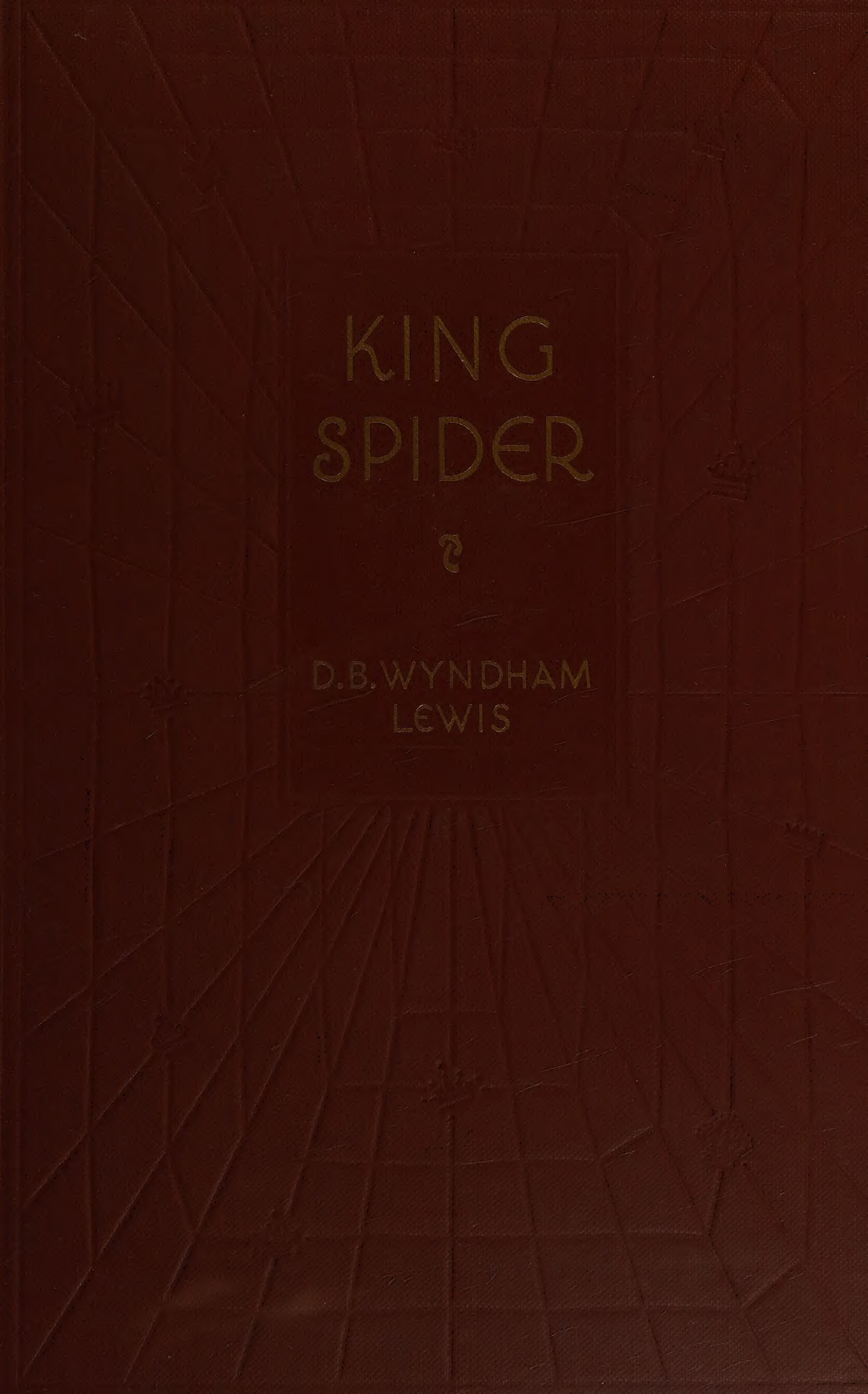

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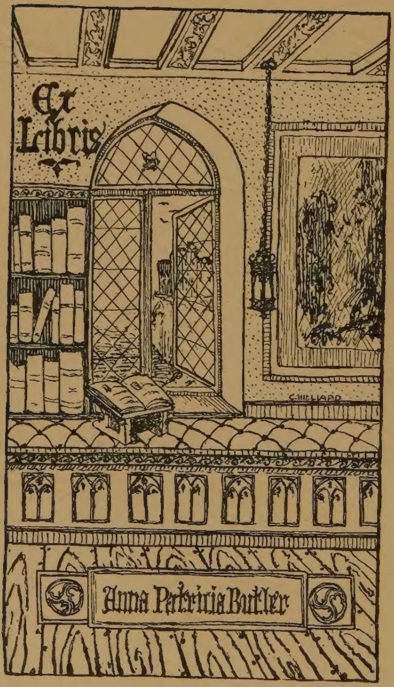
D. B. WYNDHAM LEWIS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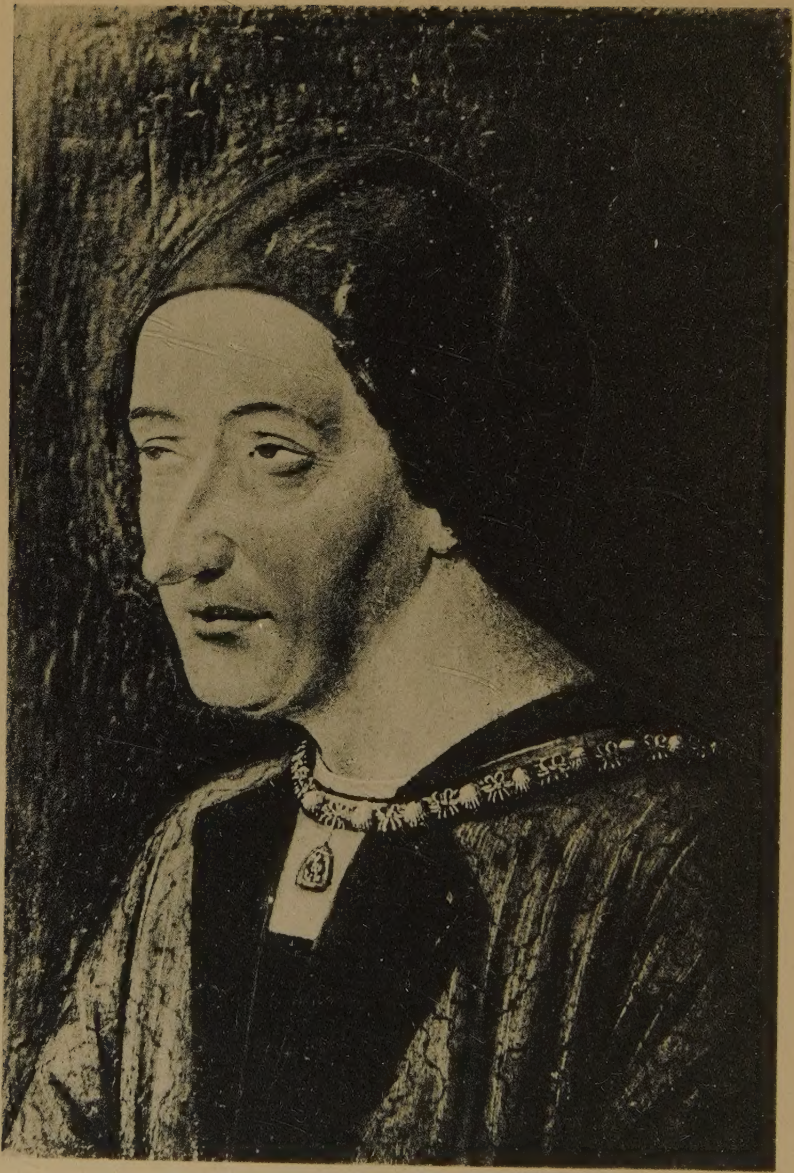

Louis XI
A presumed portrait, by Colin d'Amiens

KING SPIDER

Some Aspects of Louis XI of France and His Companions

BY

D. B. WYNDHAM LEWIS

AUTHOR OF "FRANÇOIS VILLON," ETC.

> *"The universal Spider."*
> —JEHAN MOLINET, *Poet*
> (*On Louis XI*)

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MCMXXIX

PREFATORY NOTE

This is neither a biography of Louis XI nor a chronicle of his packed reign. Chronicle and biography have already been written, once and for all, in two monumental volumes by M. Pierre Champion, a work which one can but salute, here and wherever there is again occasion to mention it, in humility and reverence. Nor is this book an attempt to set in parallel various legends composed by romantic literary men concerning Louis XI and the iron facts of history which refute them; for this has also been done, and exhaustively, and recently, by Mr. Orville W. Mosher. Rather is this an essay, or a series of aspects, somewhat after the model of Thackeray in "The Four Georges," or—more distantly—of M. Lenotre in his superb series of Revolutionary studies: an attempt to display, from contemporary and authentic sources alone, a series of pictures, as in a Book of Hours, of an extraordinary man and his background.

Thus this book has no academic pretensions at all, though one may take leave to maintain that it is concerned as much with real history as is the heaviest treatise. To know that Robespierre was not only foppish in dress but finicking in his manner of eating oranges, which he took pride in peeling with one hand, is to increase one's stock of understanding of the temperament of that frigid fanatic and sophist, and to provide one more key to the significance of others of his preferences more laden with consequence for history. Similarly with Louis XI, who, for example, was an exact and imperious in ordering a certain kind of hat as in dictating a document of State, was a strong, but far from a silent man (and how the mention of the voice, or the manner of speaking, of some historical figure brings that figure instantly to life, as when Eginhard reports that the immense, cloud-wrapped, almost legendary Charlemagne had a high voice, for all his stature!) and preferred dogs to women.

The contents of this book, then, are in the nature of marginal notes and sketches to the chronicle of Louis' time. "I have been taken to task," says Thackeray in his preface to "The Four Georges," "for not having given grave historical treatises which it was never my intention to attempt. Not about battles, about politics, about statesmen and measures of State, did I ever think to lecture you, but to sketch the manners and life of the old world, to amuse for a few hours with talk about the old society." For the same reason I have left on one side the enormously subtle and tortuous diplomacy of Louis XI's reign, which has been unravelled by more skilful hands than mine, to dwell on more human things. Thus there will be found in these pages mention of a temperamental artist who split his hose (so he said) while dancing the Morris before the Dauphin and his young wife at Tours, at their marriage feast. Does this not demolish the five hundred years between us more instantly than the discussion of a detailed despatch from the Milanese Ambassador concerning the Pragmatic Sanction? Again, which is the more valuable to spectators of the human comedy, the vivid and moving story of the little romantic Scots Dauphine and her unhappy end, or the long legal and political wrangle over the Burgundian succession? And it would be possible, as I have suggested, to maintain successfully that the one is as much history as the other.

But although this is not a treatise for the academic, it is on the other hand not simply a collection of decorative trifles and bric-à-brac, "the brains of singing birds, the sunny halves of peaches." I have endeavored to extract, from the authentic sources I mention in a later page, sufficient "pure history" to make a balanced picture. Where a battle or a treaty has seemed necessary to my design it has been included. The brief selection from Louis' 2000 letters, again, has been made to show many aspects of his character; one letter conveying an order to found new artillery; others conveying orders to buy a new hat, to prolong the English truce, to find a good post for a one-legged war veteran, to prepare the fleet for sea; a letter conveying ironic thanks to two subordinates, another ordering a covey of peacocks for a country house. And here I would repeat tirelessly that everything in these pages is drawn (unless plainly otherwise stated) from the contemporary sources I set forth in another place. There is no fiction here. Where there is conversation, it is not imagined but recorded; where there are descriptions of men or things, they are similarly authentic and unadorned. ("All history," said Dr. Johnson, "so far as it is not supported by contemporary evidence, is romance"). And I have refrained, as a matter of elementary honor, from the fashionable vice of the moment among the Decorative Biography School: which is to seek a motive, and, not finding a likely one, to invent it coolly and set it down as the Word and the Law, without hesitation, explanation, qualification, consternation, or detestation. It would be as impressive (and as easy) to supply the last thoughts of Louis XI as those of Philip II of Spain; but the place for such literary exercises is in honest fiction.

Where I have permitted myself to make deductions, they are strictly such, I trust, as can be lawfully drawn from the facts; nor, in making them, have I had any prejudice to serve, or any preconceived theory to which the facts must be bent, or any private mullygrub of the mind: which (I say it humbly) represents one more difference between myself and the Masters—the Gibbons, Macaulays, Freemans, Froudes, and J. R. Greens. It might well have been these great figures of whom Montaigne was thinking when he said, speaking of manipulators of history, *"ils se donnent loy de juger, et par consequent d'incliner l'Histoire à leur fantaisie";* [1] but I am informed by a well-known Don that it would be incorrect to assume this, since Montaigne lived in the sixteenth, but they in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. For myself, when the amiable and enthusiastic John Richard Green permits himself such a declaration as "England thrilled at the news with a sense of national shame such as she had never felt before"—referring to King John's vassalage to the Holy See in the early XIIIth century, a procedure as normal among rulers in that age of feudal overlordships as opening welfare hostels is today, I am not sad, nor censorious, still less hilarious, but vaguely, cosily happy at the sight of a good man enjoying his innocent caprice.

It is necessary to add that in making this book I have eschewed, as far as possible, any needless pomp of footnotes, which, as a modern historian has well observed, are often employed chiefly to parade and glorify the immense scholarship of the writer (sometimes for a more sinister purpose still) [2] and to inspire awe, bedazzlement, and even worship in the reader. My authorities I set down in a later page. It may be reasonably assumed that I have read them. And finally, if a more personal point may be noted, I differ once more, and profoundly, from the majority of English-speaking writers of all degrees of competency on medieval subjects, in that I happen to possess an intimate understanding of that System which was the mainspring of the Middle Ages, which is still vast, vigorous, and unchanging, and which (considering its roots) is like to remain so.

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[1] "They arrogate to themselves the right to judge, and consequently to bend History to their own fancy."

D. B. W. L.

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[2] For example, the notorious footnotes in Gibbon and the footnotes to Anatole France's "Jeanne d'Arc", which Andrew Lang assumed to have been done by contract, and which in many places contradict the text.

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A presumed portrait by Colin d'Amiens

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I

1. PRELIMINARY
2. CONTEMPLATION OF A SKULL

I

PRELIMINARY

When, on a rainy evening of October 1793, the Citizen Joly, sexton of the Madeleine, spat on his hands and stamped down the last spadeful of earth over the headless body of her who had been Marie-Antoinette (he charged six livres for the Widow Capet's bier and twenty-five for the burial) he buried forever something which had been part of the flesh and fabric and fortune of the French nation for eight hundred years: the last vestige of the Capetian Monarchy, cut off with the head of Louis XVI in January of the same year. In this long line of anointed kings which began with Hugues Capet in the year 987 and stretched so far down the ages, there had been strong kings and mediocre kings, one great saint and legislator, one or two nonentities, one madman, more than one administrative genius, more than one man of letters, and many warriors. The Capet of them all to whom France—modern France—probably owes most is Louis XI.

A stale stink of the theater hangs around his name, a wondrous legend of melodrama. For this one of his enemies is in some degree responsible, but chiefly the great Romantics of the nineteenth century, Sir Walter Scott and Victor Hugo, and with them Casimir Delavigne; whose fervent, luxuriant imaginations and lack of scientific curiosity have conjured up a background of Gothic donjons and red fire against which the figure of Louis XI stands like a Mephistopheles. The pages of *Quentin Durward* and *Notre-Dame de Paris* are too well-known to need any quotation here. Through them softly treads the sinister shape of *Monsieur Louis de France,* devising tortures, muttering prayers, behaving like a provincial character-actor. At his heels tread two dark shadows as terrible as he, the barber Olivier le Daim and the executioner Tristan l'Hermite. Through the barred Gothic window can be perceived trees, a gaunt forest; from each tree swings the body of a man. From behind the arras are heard the moans of the newest victim in his iron cage. The King licks his lips, rubs his hands, shrugs his evil shoulders with a senile chuckle, and continues to pace softly to and fro, reading (in a sudden access of superstitious fear) in his Book of Hours. It is a question whether Louis is more fearful when executing his vengeance or when (as in Théodore de Banville's one-act piece of sugar-candy, *Gringoire*) unbending in a grisly moment of generosity.

This caricature, this rant and fustian are, as I have said, chiefly the work of what M. Daudet has very reasonably called the Stupid Nineteenth Century. When Casimir Delavigne's contribution to the great Bogey legend, *Louis XI,* an inconceivably dull, foolish, and rancid melodrama in verse devoid of any pretense to historical truth and stamped in every line with its date, 1832, was by some strange aberration revived at the Comédie-Française recently [1] a chorus of protest and anger went up from the literate. "Casimir," wrote the historian and critic Lucien Dubech bluntly, "perpetrated here some of the lowest mischief of all time and of any country." The sentence may be applied to the work of more than one serious historian of Casimir's century, and not of his country alone. Intellectual dishonesty, blandness of ignorance, and caricature go sweetly hand in hand with some manifestations of Victorian complacency.

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[1] 1928.

The primal and most valuable source of authentic evidence is the huge correspondence of Louis himself; some two thousand letters written at his dictation by his secretaries and signed with a sure, bold "Loys"—in one or two cases annotated or written entire in his hand. The next source is Louis' Ordinances, of which there are more than two thousand. The next is the evidence of the men who were in contact with him and have written down their impressions: his friend the Burgundian Commynes, Chastellain, the enemy Thomas Basin, Bishop of Lisieux (whose bitter Latin memoirs compare Louis unfavorably with Cain, Phalaris, Nero, Domitian, Marius, Sulla, Busiris, and the Atridæ), and Olivier de la Marche, an opponent like Basin, and like him an entirely honest man. Finally there is the evidence of private Parisian journals like the *Chronique scandaleuse* of Jehan de Roye, notary of the Châtelet—so called because it contains no scandal—and the Journal of Jehan Maupoint, bachelor of theology, and the highly prejudiced verse of Jehan Molinet. All these are contemporary and first-hand. The work of later historians on the character and reign of Louis XI, Michelet, Duclos, Dufresne de Beaucourt, and a score more, has been recently corrected, crystallized, completed, and for ever superseded in the volumes of M. Pierre Champion which I have mentioned already, which are a monument of what a modern British historical authority has well called "that ceaseless and immense research which dignifies the modern French School of History." These two volumes, magnificent in clarity and vision, any student of the complex reign of Louis XI must regard, I repeat, with feelings of humility and reverence. They have enlightened me in a score of perplexities.

From this huge mass of evidence the actual character of Louis XI emerges. He was a great and a modern king. His country's debt to him is considerable, and amply admitted today by men devoted to the Republican Idea. He was no hero. He was a bad son, in open rebellion against his father. He treated his first wife villainously, the wife of his youth, the tragic little Scots Princess Margaret; her brief story (as we shall perceive) is as poignant as that of Sophia Dorothea of Zell in Thackeray's study. He hated—God help him!—Scotsmen generally. He was, when occasion seemed to demand it, unscrupulous, though no more so than the diplomats of his or any other age. He trusted few men, and had no mercy for traitors. But many acts of clemency and even kindness towards enemies in his power must be accorded him, and the melodramatic cruelties on which the Romantics battened become strangely diminished in the cold light of examination. Personally he was as brave as a lion, leading his troops into the thick of the fight at the siege of Dieppe, at Dambach, where he was wounded, and in the fierce confusion of the Montlhéry engagement. His sexual life was strangely chaste for a monarch of any period: he had one or two passing love-adventures in his youth, but he strictly kept the oath of fidelity sworn to his dull, plain, second wife Charlotte of Savoy after the death of an infant son. Women were never his passion, nor had he any leanings to the unnatural vice of William of Orange and other *détraqués*. His passion, his devouring life-passion, was the Realm of France.

It is essential to keep this fact firmly fixed in the mind when contemplating the figure of Louis. The beating down of the enemies of France, at home and abroad, the regeneration of his country, the redemption and gathering together under one Crown of all the lost and alienated lands of France —this was his single object and life-work. With the milk of his rustic wet-nurse Jehanne Pouponne of Bourges he would seem to have imbibed the passion of the French Peasant for his soil, *la terre:* that dumb, dogged, rooted love, that fierce attachment to his fields in which are mixed ruse and policy and a tenacious will. It was for this, for the sake of his lands, that the peasant Louis XI traveled unceasingly up and down the roads of France, eating hastily in one hamlet, sleeping in another miles distant, in the saddle again next morning and away; perpetually issuing orders, receiving reports, dictating letters. It was for this that he tirelessly watched and planned and plotted and bribed; for although his personal courage was high he invariably preferred to gain his point if possible by money rather than by arms. *"Il ne mettoit riens au hasard,"* says Commynes, *"et ne vouloit pour riens chercher des batailles"*—He left nothing to chance, and would on no account deliberately provoke battle. And Commynes, the observer of men and things, says again, underlining the intelligence and ruse of his King: "Among all men whom I have ever known, the most skillful in withdrawing himself from an awkward mess (*un mauvais pas en temps d'adversité*) was King Louis XI, my master; and also the most humble in speech and dress."

There is another notable and commanding trait in him, doubly notable today, when the world is so full of the silly swollen swagger and boasting of Big Business, which, one would think, invented efficiency the day before yesterday. Louis XI, the medieval, knew all there is to know about efficiency: the value and the power of Money, and its use in buy-ing men, the importance of the single personal command, the importance of time. Some of his letters are models of curtness. "See to this at once," he orders. And again, "Master So-and-So, you will carry this out immediately, on receipt of this letter." And sometimes, in cold tight-lipped displeasure: "Master So-and-So, my friend, you have made a mess of it" —*vous avez tout gasté*. Almost invariably his letters to subordinates end with the formula "and let there be no failure." He had no counsellors about him; he had servants: and from his servants he inflexibly exacted obedience, accuracy, thoroughness, and speed. It was partly to insure this that he established a fast courier and postal service throughout his lands. Nor did he spare himself. His activity is dynamic and perpetual: in one letter he proposes, though suffering from hæmorrhoids, to ride thirty miles day and night to give audience to a protonotary on some piece of business, and to ride back next morning. His sense of the value of commerce was keen and developed. He assembled a National Business Convention at Tours in 1470, summoning the principal merchants of France to discuss their interests and the future of French trade. He firmly established the silk industry which made, and still makes, the fine great town of Lyons. He established municipal government and sanitation in the towns. To protect trade, among other necessary things, he saw personally to the equipment of the army and the fleet. And all this amid endless recurring troubles at home and abroad, the menace of the great feudal lords, the menace of England; amid the perpetual worriment of intrigue and spying and treaties, marching and countermarching, circumventing enemies and anticipating their moves. Accurately does the eighteenth-century historian Duclos sum him up: *"Somme tout, ce fut un roy."* Everything considered, this was a King.

His method may be summed up in the familiar maxim quoted by Machiavelli, but much older than that philosopher: *Divide et impera,* divide and rule. The Roman Senate had practised it before Louis; after him Catherine de Medici was again to demonstrate its worth. Louis learns the business of ruling while still a youth, when Charles VII packs him off to his fief of Dauphiny after the rebellion called the Praguerie, in which he has taken sides against his father. On assuming the crown Louis has against him at home the feudal princes, the powerful, gorgeous House of Burgundy, Lorraine, Brittany, Bourbon, Nemours, Armagnac, Anjou; beyond these, the English, perpetually threatening, periodically descending. Conflict with Burgundy is soon inevitable; its lord, the violent, dangerous Charles the Rash, called "The Great Boar of the Ardennes," assembles other great feudal lords against the Crown. Louis puts Bourbon and Nemours out of action in the indecisive engagement of Montlhéry, almost under the walls of Paris; the other members of this "League of the Public Weal" (*La Ligue du Bien Public*) are bought off with money and towns. *Divide et impera.* His brother Charles, who is hand in glove with his enemies, hands over the duchy of Normandy for 60,000 livres. Then, trusting to his skill and address, Louis seeks a personal interview with Burgundy, is drawn by this tactical blunder into the ambush of Péronne, and barely escapes with his life from the fury of Burgundy. He escapes, at the cost of an humiliating treaty, signs, basely sacrifices the Liégois, whom he had stirred up against Charles, assists Charles in punishing them. The truce is soon over, and Burgundy on the warpath again. But Heaven is on Louis' side: the madman Burgundy plunges deep and more deeply into frantic expeditions, against Lorraine, the Swiss, the Germans. Louis bides his time and stealthily encourages Burgundy's enemies; and surely enough Charles the Rash at length meets his fate outside the walls of Nancy in 1477. Here is an enormous blessing already, arriving without effort, almost, on Louis' part; for Burgundy has no heir, and his vast lands must return to the Crown. Louis does not gather them in at once, for there are difficulties of succession in the way. He soon makes another blunder, for he is not infallible—neither is he an arm-chair critic reviewing the position in 1929—in allowing Burgundy's heiress, who holds the Low Countries in her own right, to marry into the House of Austria and breed fruitful trouble for France centuries hence. But very soon Heaven sends Louis another gift. The good king René of Anjou dies, bequeathing him Anjou. Provence, left to René's childless heir, will fall in automatically to the Crown in due course; and to round off everything neatly, Marie de Bourgogne dies suddenly from a riding accident and removes all the trouble about the Burgundian succession. As long ago as his accession Louis has bought the towns of Picardy and has united the Pyrenean province of the Roussillon to the Crown. His progress is steady; the redeemed provinces are rich, they form a barrier to exterior enemies. The feudal menace is practically stamped out. Nemours is executed for high treason. Armagnac is in the Bastille. Only Brittany remains. After intervals of fighting (Dieppe, Pontoise, Dax) and truce, Louis can sign a peace-treaty with the English at Picquigny in 1475, ending the Hundred Years' War. A temporary peace with Brittany follows it. By 1481 the Crown of France holds the lands of Burgundy, Picardy, Normandy, Anjou, Maine, Provence, and the Roussillon, and is free of the English. Partly by ruse, partly by fighting, partly by diplomatic skill, partly by knowing when and how to wait, partly by temporarily sacrificing pride and self-respect for a greater end, partly by what is called "good fortune," partly by bribery, Louis can die leaving a united France, assured for years of peace and prosperity, capable of being guided during his heir's minority by the hand of a woman, his daughter, Anne de Beaujeu. Here, in its barest possible outline, is surely a man's work well done. For his saving of human lives alone he stands a benefactor.

His almost single pleasure is hunting, which he passionately loves. He is always surrounded by dogs and birds. In the house of Plessis-les-Tours, where he dies, he has a vast aviary in his room, and the song of his canaries and linnets and other *petis oyseaulx,* the tinkling of their bells, pleases the withered, indomitable old man in his last illness. He is perpetually receiving and sending presents of hunting-dogs (and the servant who delivers Louis' present to the distant potentate, observes Pierre Champion, undoubtedly returns with secret political information valuable to his master). In 1468, Jehan de Roye records, the King sends one Perdriel to Paris to buy him a talking bird which can say "Thief, rascal, son of a whore, get out, get out! Perrette, give me a drink!" and several other *beaulx mots.* He has favorite dogs, whose names are Paris, Artus, and Chier-Amy. One of them, figured in bronze, will lie by his kneeling figure on the tomb at Cléry. The Royal kennels contain for the most part greyhounds and spaniels; other sporting dogs are presented to Louis by the English Ambassador, the King of Scotland, and Lorenzo de Medici. He likes hawking; but stag hunting is his joy.

His taste in dress is sober, simple, economical, even shabby, though on occasion he realizes the ritual importance of the splendid clothes which the mob demands of its kings. But traveling-costume or a short gown in the Italian mode is his general wear, and sometimes, visiting a shrine, the costume of a pilgrim, a gown of *gros drap gris,* gray coarse stuff. He is, however, particular about his linen, and his shirts are of the finest Holland. He wears no jewels. In the matter of personal hygiene he is scrupulous, as were the middle and upper classes of the Middle Ages generally. In his chamber at Plessis there is a large bath, with heating appliances. Rosewater is an essential part of his toilet.

He prefers the company of the middle class to the company of the great, and in his perpetual traveling it is at the houses of the middle class that he makes his brief lodging for choice. His devoted servant Jehan Bourré is of this class; he is ennobled by the King's hand, and as the Seigneur du Plessis his establishment, his wealth, his connoisseurship, are second to none of the appanages of the *noblesse*. Louis ennobles also many of the high bourgeoisie of the towns, mayors and aldermen. This is a deliberate plan—to confront the nobility, whose prestige was now well on the decline, with chosen members of that wealthy, solid, cultivated middle class which buttressed society in the Middle Ages as its remnants do now.

And his religion.

Had he been an atheist, like Frederick the Great or William of Orange (both quaintly surnamed in their day "The Protestant Hero") had he even adhered politely to the outward forms of the Faith and made jest of it in private, his reputation would have stood high with the majority of modern historians. But he was a Catholic, and the charge of being sunk in superstition is therefore made against him (as against his age) automatically and in a routine way by the enemies of his Faith and those unacquainted with it: a charge exquisitely pointed, proceeding from the mouths of certain champions of the Jazz Age, with its jostling welter of mascots and ju-jus and fetishes and charms, fortune-tellers, crystal gazers, spiritists, psychoanalysts, and miscellaneous contradictory touts and charlatans flourishing under the embracing cloak of science, with its readiness to accept any hypothesis put forward by any of these without demanding the shadow of proof of any sort. But it is an historical commonplace, on which one need not linger, that where an Epicurean materialism is the fashion in any society, there the crop of childish superstitions springs most luxuriant, there men are most credulous. The faith of Louis XI was essentially that of any other Catholic in any age and any nation, but necessarily tinctured with the man's own peculiar personality. He lacked the gaiety of the Faith which is perceived in such great Christians as St. Louis of France, Blessed Thomas More, Chancellor of England, and a hundred saints of every nationality. His devotion was almost somber, containing the practical and the mystical mingled; its complexion was rather Spanish than French—he had a strain of Spanish blood in his veins. He once expressed the wish that he could have been a monk: he would have been such an ascetic as Zurbaran painted, brooding and ecstatic, with burning eyes, absorbed before the Crucifix. His lifelong devotion to Our Lady softens this Spanish asperity. He was certainly as strong a Christian (with unsaintly limitations) as the great King his predecessor—

. . . Saint Louis, sergent de Dieu,
Qui ceignit en terre africaine
La rude corde franciscaine
Sur sa robe de velours bleu.

[St. Louis, Sergeant of God, who on African soil girdled himself with the rough Franciscan rope above his gown of blue velvet.]

Alfred Droin, *Invocation aux Muses de Sicile.*

But here again the peasant in him is revealed. Over and above the daily hearing of Mass and other devotions which were a commonplace in his age he made countless pilgrimages up and down the fair land of France, and (especially towards the end of his life) loaded famous shrines with gifts; money, plate, jewels, votive lamps, golden chalices, grilles of silver. For excessive indulgence in this he was indeed very bluntly rebuffed by Elie de Bourdeilles, Cardinal Archbishop of Tours and Franciscan friar, who, when the King wrote to him in the last years seeking fresh outlets for his generosity, answered that it would be better to give less money to shrines and to endeavor to lighten the burden of taxation on his people instead. In this aspect Louis is truly, as Pierre Champion observes, *le paysan maquignon,* the rustic horse-jobber, the bargain-driver. In return for his gifts and prayers he certainly expected something from Heaven (which does not seem on first principles too outrageous. Do not all the pious make a bargain with Heaven, are there not Divine sanctions, even commands to that end?) and he certainly received a great deal in return. Curious blend of the mystic and the material! His pilgrimages to some of the shrines and oratories he enriched—St. Marthe of Provence, Redon Abbey on the Breton frontier, Our Lady of Nantilly at Saumur, in Angevin territory—undoubtedly had political motives mixed with religious; but where, in such a man, is one to begin to disentangle his politics from his religion? He prayed and worked for France. And if some of his acts fell short of his Faith, as they did, he being a man and not an angel, there is the thundering common-sense of Dr. Johnson to explain more frequent and glaring inconsistencies than his. "Sir, are you so grossly ignorant of human nature as not to know that a man may be very sincere in good principles, without having good practice?"

And Louis was no bigot. He was strongly attached to the Holy See, both personally and as King of France, "eldest daughter of the Church." But he could criticize the erudite

Pius II in the presence of the Milanese Ambassador. "This man is a bad Pope for the House of France." And again, "Do not be afraid of his dying, Messire Alberic, he is a bad Pope." Towards Sixtus IV Louis' attitude was more strongly defined still; no devoutly Catholic king has ever addressed a Pope in such terms. Sixtus' diplomacy leads him, in concert with the King of Aragon, to threaten Lorenzo de Medici, Louis' friend and ally, and the League of Italy. A letter, respectful, brief, and stinging, goes to the Pope from Louis. "Would," (writes the King) "that Your Holiness would deign to consider what you are doing. Here is the whole fabric of Christendom menaced by the Turk,[2] and Your Holiness is menacing the Florentines! Your Holiness is not unaware of the prophecy in the Apocalypse concerning scandals that shall come upon the Church: would that Your Holiness (whom God preserve) were innocent of participation in such unhappy things!" (*"Utinam a tam nefandis rebus Sanctitas Vestra immaculata foret, quam Deus omnipotens conservare dignetur regimini Ecclesiæ!"*) And the same day, from Chartres (August 10, 1478) Louis writes to the Sacred College and to the Duchess of Milan announcing that if the Pope and Aragon persist in their intention a force of four or five hundred French lances will be despatched immediately to the help of the Florentines. This is not the language and procedure of a bigot. Sixtus threatens excommunication. "It is a pity," answers Louis, "I had no vote at the last Conclave. It would never have been given for such a vicious Pope." But the quarrel blows over and Louis is (as he has never ceased to be) the devoted son of Holy Church.

Again (for it seems necessary to dwell a moment on these things, from which such glad, false deductions are so often made) Louis is determined, as so many Catholic kings throughout history have been determined, to check and regulate the undue flow of money from his kingdom into the coffers of the Court of Rome: in his own words, to check "the extraction of moneys and other abuses which take place on behalf of the Court of Rome, by the action of those who hold our Holy Father in their hands."[3] It is curious that some, lacking the elementary clarity of thought which enables an obvious distinction to be made between decisions of this kind and disloyalty to the Apostolic See, should speak of them as if they were inspired by a kind of latent Protestantism and instinctive revolt against the office of the Vicar of Christ. This is nonsense. The medievals were able to think clearly.

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[2] In 1453 the Turks captured Constantinople and became a European power.

Louis had (like Dr. Johnson) a great absorbing fear of death as he grew old: a fear dictated to one knows not what extent by his passion for his work and its fruition. But when death could be no longer warded off he met it calmly, courageously, without a whimper. Addison called young Lord Warwick to his bedside to see how a Christian could die: "unluckily," adds Horace Walpole, "he died of brandy." The deathbed of Louis XI affords a better spectacle: he makes his peace with God and dies in harness, issuing almost with his last breath instructions for securing the good weal of the realm he has saved. I do not think he had much need to fear what comes after death. He had had his share of human sins and weaknesses, he had made (not possessing second sight) more than one serious blunder in judgment, but he had done his duty doggedly and had not once swerved from his task. He found France still dismembered and exhausted, he left her united and vigorous, the enemy defeated within and without. If he bargained like a peasant with Our Lady and the saints, he received good value. He died (I quote Duclos again) *"aimé du peuple, haï des Grands, redouté de ses ennemis, et respecté de toute l'Europe"*—loved by the commons,[4] hated by the great, feared by his enemies, and respected by the whole of Europe. "He has put," said his successor François I, "all other kings out of the running (*hors de page*)."

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[3] *"L'extraction des pécunes et autres abus qui se font de par la Court de Romme, au moyen de ceulx qui tiennent nostre Saint-Père entre leurs mains."*

. . . Everything considered, this was a King.

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[4] But not invariably.

2

CONTEMPLATION OF A SKULL

Between Cosne in the Nivernais and Tours the Loire River, pursuing its way among tufted islands and golden sands towards the Atlantic, takes a wide curving sweep, with Orleans at the mid-point of the bend. Within this arc between Loire and Cher lies the plain of the Sologne, the Roman *Solitarium,* for so many centuries a desert of marshes, sparse woods, lonely meres, fogs, fevers, brigands, sand and rotten clay, but now drained and fertile. Over the western frontier of this plain, near the waters of the Loire and in its valley, whose serene and gracious air seems always to hold a soft light of its own, not derived from an outer sun, stands the village of Cléry; some ten miles from Orleans on the old road to Blois. On the road, some time before the cobbled village street, with its old roofs and its inns the "Beautiful Ostrich" and the "Image of Our Lady," is entered, the eye is glorified with the far-lifted vision of the basilica of Our Lady of Cléry.[1]

The tall church springs above the roofs of Cléry village and stands in its slender grace and luminous pure proportion of

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[1] Leo XIII raised this church to the rank of a minor basilica in 1894. It is nearly two-thirds the length of Notre-Dame at Paris.

THE CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF CLÉRY
Present day

stone and glass—triple nave, clerestories, transept, ambulatory, flying-buttresses, high vaulted roof, *moult noble et belle*—like some reliquary fashioned by one of those devout master-craftsmen of the Middle Ages whose ambition Heredia has sung in one of his grave and gorgeous sonnets:

Aussi, voyant mon âge incliner vers le soir,
Je veux, ainsi que fit Fray Juan de Ségovie,
Mourir en ciselant dans l'or un ostensoir.

[Thus, when my life's last beads are almost told,
May I, like Fray Juan of old Segovia,
Die chiselling a monstrance in fine gold.]

—*Les Trophées.*

Flamboyant Gothic has rarely produced more exact and sustained harmony. The sixty noble windows which in Louis XI's time flamed like a conflagration of jewels are now, except those at the end of the choir, filled with clear white glass, and the high walls, once covered with tapestry, are dazzlingly bare in the sun of a late autumn afternoon of 1928. In place of the Royal Chapter of Canons, keeping public prayer rising to heaven like a ceaseless fountain hour after hour, day after day, the children of Cléry village are finishing the psalms of Vespers, and in place of the celebrated motets of Jehan van Ockeghem the Fleming, Master of the King's Music and the greatest European musician of his age, a schoolmistress is extracting the hymn *Lucis Creator* piecemeal from a protesting harmonium. But the beauty of the basilica remains, and its crowds and some of the ancient glory return to it still every September, at the time of the Cléry pilgrimage; and still, enthroned under a lumbering pseudo-Gothic stone canopy of the nineteenth century, Our Lady of Cléry with the Child Jesus, enveloped in a great stiff cope of white embroidered silk, in the mode of Spain, looks down the choir and sees her faithful servant Louis XI of France kneeling in effigy, his hands outstretched and his eyes fixed on her. So Louis ordered his monument to be set, at such an oblique angle to the nave that his bronze counterfeit might kneel and supplicate his Patroness throughout the ages.[2]

But this is not the *pourtraiture du Roy nostre sire,* in hunting costume, horn slung on back, his favorite dog by his side, which Messire Jehan Bourré at the King's command ordered with such careful detail from Master Colin of Amiens, to be cast in bronze by Master Conrad of Cologne and Master Laurens Wrine of Tours, the Royal cannon-founder. The Calvinistic fury of Condé's troops, while they held the Orléanais in 1562, destroyed this statue, as they destroyed—burned, ravished, sacked, looted—so many other memorable and sacred things in France, as they very nearly destroyed the church of Cléry entire. The bronze statue was replaced in 1622 by the present marble, carved by Michael Bourdin of Orleans with (as may be readily perceived) more than one anachronism in the costume and no particular fidelity to tradition as regards the features: yet a sound piece of craftsmanship. This, again, was toppled down in 1792, beheaded by joyous *sansculottes,* broken, rescued by the admirable Lenoir for his museum in Paris, by him restored with considerable skill, replaced at the Restoration, and in 1896, after one or two unfortunate attempts at variation earlier in the century, restored finally—in the absence of original plans—as it now stands. Our Lady's statue is placed today not, as formerly, on an altar in the center of the transept, but above the high altar; but the King's eyes are still fixed on her as they were four centuries ago.

A sacristan clatters down the aisle with keys, stoops, and pulls at a ring in an oblong plate of iron, hinged and flush with the floor of the nave. He swings up the plate, and descends a short flight of stone steps, switching on a harsh blaze of electricity. The vault is small, and completely occupied on the right-hand side by a massy stone sepulchre, in which, undisturbed in the year of the fall of the Capetian Monarchy by an envoy of the Revolution who stripped their coffins of lead for the guns,[3] lie the bones of Louis XI, King of France, his second wife Charlotte of Savoy, and their second child, Louis.

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[2] See Appendix A: Our Lady of Cléry.

The afternoon sunshine slants through the high clerestory windows down the steps, paling before the cruder glow underground. From the nave comes the sound of fresh young voices singing the *Magnificat.*

"Deposuit potentes de sede, et exaltavit humiles. . . ."

"Et voici," says the sacristan, *"le crâne du roi Louis, et celui de sa femme."*

The two skulls lie together in a glass case at the end of their tomb. Both were twice damaged in the last century by falls of the roof of their funeral-chamber provoked by the probing of archaeologists ignorant of the existence of the staircase. Of the King's skull there remain the lower jaw, stubbornly prognathous, the upper jaw, and, resting on it, the cranial bowl, reddish-brown, sawn through horizontally by the royal embalmers soon after death. This, then, is the crucible in which so much Italian subtlety was brewed, so much foxy ruse and patient calculation, and debate, and dissimulation, shrewd assessment of men and their price, and patriotic fury, and dogged devotion. Through the lump of nervous gray substance which filled this bowl there vibrated a hard, keen, luminous intelligence; from it there radiated a hundred fluid threads and feelers communicating policy to that brooding brain. This is the skull of the master, bearing also the plain marks of that hypertrophy or meningitis which towards the end of his life so quickly struck him into senility.

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[3] The behavior of this man, a workman of Beaugency, is sufficiently extraordinary. He called a canon of Cléry, one Creuzé, to witness formally that he had not violated the King's tomb. The year was 1792.

At the sight of any great skull, such as Swift's, the barriers of the centuries melt suddenly away and a flood of realistic and intimate recollection occupies the mind. This red-brown bulging bowl is the head of a greater man than Swift.

The smaller skull of Queen Charlotte by its side is without its upper half, and of a lighter brown. Between the two lies a fragment of the King's sternum, extracted from his breast when his heart was taken to St. Denis to be buried with his ancestors. In the sarcophagus below the skeletons are almost complete. Louis' skull dominates all. Power lingers in it, like the scent of wine in an empty jar.

From the high vaulting of the nave echo children's voices in the last longing supplication of the *Salve Regina,* which the owner of this skull had so often repeated in this church, possibly before this same statue, absorbed in his devotion.

"O clemens, O pia, O dulcis!"

Chairs scrape on the stone pavement overhead, feet clatter, doors creak and subside. At the top of the steps the sacristan lets down the lid of the vault again with a faint clang. The white spaces of nave and choir are full of sunlight and of silence. A village boy is extinguishing the altar candles; a tiny bird swoops and loops lightly across the arches.

The history of the shrine of Cléry begins in the thirteenth century, but its magnificence belongs to Louis XI. This church is his monument, and it is impossible to separate it from his memory. His personality pervades it today in death as long ago in life; yet he did but continue and complete the work of others. The finding of the statue of Our Lady of Cléry in

1280 made the village church of that time a place of pilgrimage very soon as famous throughout France as Our Lady of Rocamadour and Our Lady of Chartres. Simon de Melun, Marshal of France and companion of St. Louis, founded five prebends there; Philippe le Bel added five more and drew up plans for a fine new church. Philippe de Valois in 1339 laid the first stone of the new church, which the infidel Salisbury destroyed in the next century during the siege of Orleans. His head was irreparably smashed by a French cannon ball shortly afterwards. St. Joan spurred past the ruins on the way from her victory of Orleans. Charles VII attached certain revenues to the restoration work. It was a little later, in 1443, that the Dauphin Louis, at Dieppe, swore the oath which finally raised Cléry from the ground and made it the jewel of Flamboyant Gothic it still remains. The circumstances are as gallant and glowing as a page from an illuminated manuscript, and may most fittingly be related here, while we are still contemplating the fane they glorified.

The port of Dieppe is familiar to all who cross by the daily steamers to and from Newhaven in Sussex. After entering the harbor the steamer passes on the port side a tall cliff crowned by the fishermen's church. Underneath, in the cliff-face, are those caves or grottoes called Les Goves, inhabited by the very poor. This broad steep cliff, which commands the whole town, is (and was) called Le Pollet, and is today the fishermen's quarter of Old Dieppe beloved of so many artists and especially, in the Yellow Book period, of the poet Ernest Dowson. Here in 1443 stood a redoubtable fort or bastille of stone, whose guns could cover the town and the roads entering it—for the town was then very small.

The English commander Talbot had only recently built the bastille of Le Pollet for the purpose of retaking Dieppe from the French corsair Desmarets, who held the town across the harbor. Although the English had a strong footing in Normandy, which had been theirs for some twenty-six years, and had turned Rouen, their headquarters, into a stout fortress, there had been a recent peasant rising in the valley of the Vire and in Caux. This, with Desmarets' seizing of Dieppe, called for strong measures, for the English were not likely to allow the considerable riches of Normandy to be wrested from them without a tough struggle. We have therefore on the one hand Talbot's troops and artillery on the Pollet, and Desmarets in the town of Dieppe, revictualled at intervals from the sea by the French. The Dauphin, a youth of twenty, already annealed in battle, begins his march up from the south; halts in Paris, (where he lays a heavy tax—not the first—on the citizens), tours the country round Compiègne, collecting more troops and persuading hesitant nobles; and finally, on August 11, arrives with his force before the walls of Dieppe. With him is the great gallant Dunois, one of the Paladins. Talbot's artillery is doing enormous damage, and Desmarets is about to give up the unequal struggle. On August 12 Louis formally calls on the English in the bastille to surrender. They answer that they are prepared to fight to the death. Louis places his guns and gives his final orders. In the morning of August 14, the Eve of the Assumption, his troops are given a generous wine-ration;[4] and at ten A.M. his trumpets sound the assault.

In a drowsy mid-August afternoon, when the old port of Dieppe is asleep in the sun, when a few fishing boats and one or two tramp steamers only are mirrored in the calm harbor water, before the bustle of the Newhaven steamer's arrival wakes all to life, one may stand on the Pollet and reconstruct the battle of that day. Away across the harbor is the magnificent old Flamboyant church of St. Jacques; behind it, hidden St. Remy; further behind again, on the sea-front, beyond the Casino, is the Château. These witnessed the fight. The moats around Talbot's thick new fortress were wide and profound; above them on the battlements were some five hundred English, with powerful cannon, served by courageous crews. For three hours the Dauphin's men attacked and attacked under the hot sun, manning the ladders, gaining footholds, thrusting and hewing and hacking, now winning a little ground, now shaken off. The English guns were terrible, and in the end the French began to despair.

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[4] It has been drily observed that this was no great strain on Louis' purse, for this was a poor wine year.

"Then," says the Canon Médon, historian of Cléry, "the said Dauphin, finding himself in great consternation of mind and being destitute of all human aid, demanded of Jean Comte de Dunois, 'Cousin, in which direction is Notre Dame de Cléry?,' and being informed, cast himself down on his knees and vowed to Our Lady that if she would grant him victory he would rebuild the church (of Cléry) after the plans of his predecessor Philippe le Bel, and would enlarge and glorify it with great honor."

As if in answer to his supplication a sweet silvery clamor came floating across the water, clear above the roar of the guns, the clash and shock of arms, the shouts and groans of the combatants. It came from the churches of Dieppe, joyously ringing for First Vespers of the Assumption, which is one of Our Lady's greater feasts. The Dauphin ordered a fresh assault, and his men broke through the defense. This time it was victory. When all was over Louis, removing his shoes, walked barefoot to the church of St. Jacques to render thanks to God, Our

Lady, and St. James, patron of knights. His vow is called the Vow of Dieppe.[5]

Louis was not able to begin work on Cléry at once, being immediately occupied after the victory of Dieppe with leading the army of the Flayers over the Rhine, many leagues away. But in his absence his captain Dunois, that splendid soldier, diplomat, and devout client of Our Lady of Cléry, began the rebuilding, with the encouragement and assistance of Charles VII, himself a benefactor of the church. The work was pushed forward. In 1450 the sculptors began decorating the north door. Henceforth the sanctuary of Cléry and devotion to Her whose statue it held will be one of the two passions of Louis' life, his visits and gifts innumerable, his confidence unshakable. Here, in 1470, he implored Our Lady to send the Crown a son and heir, and was granted one. Here in 1471 he established, for the first time in France (though it was already a custom in Brittany) the Italian custom of ringing the midday Angelus, extending the order to the whole of his realm. In 1482, the year before his death, he began extending the nave by four more bays. And here, long before his end, he ordered his tomb.

Of the manner, whether regal or simple, in which the man who raised up and enriched this tall casket of stone and glass to the glory of God and the Mother of God entered its portals for the last time, there exists no account. Commynes, who records Louis' last moments at Plessis-les-Tours with such care, is entirely silent upon the funeral, except that, alone among contemporary historians, he remembers that the sacramental Ampulla of Coronation from Rheims, which had stood on the buffet of Louis' chamber at his passing, accompanied the body to Cléry. "It stood on his buffet" (says Commynes) "at the hour of his death; and it had been his intention to receive from it a similar anointing as that which he received at his coronation; and indeed many believed that his desire was to have his whole body anointed with it, a thing which is scarcely believable, for the said Holy Ampulla is very small, and there is not very much oil in it. I saw it at the hour of which I speak, and also when my said Lord was laid in his grave at Notre Dame de Cléry." [6]

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[5] Compare merely as an interesting historical parallel, the sudden victory of the Catholic Poles over the Bolshevik horde on the Feast of the Assumption 1920.

The immediately previous happenings are recorded. On the news of Louis' death on Saturday night, August 31, 1483, taken by a messenger spurring posthaste to Tours, there is mourning and consternation; mourning for the royal Citizen of Tours, who so cherished his city, and consternation at the turn events may take. A strong watch has already been set upon the ramparts, a strong garrison is posted at the Castle and in the town, and the Mayor and aldermen go to and fro in the night posting the guards, escorted by wax torches. Meanwhile the bells of the basilica of St. Martin of Tours begin tolling, and so continue for three days, during which time the Canons set out along the road to Plessis in answerable sad and glorious pomp to bring the body to Tours. They return escorting the bier and the Ampulla, and Louis is carried into the ancient basilica, where the new great silver grille, his gift, encloses the reliquaries of St. Martin; and the Offices begin—the Office of the Dead, the all-night vigil, the unending roll of prayers, and, with the dawn, the first of the Masses of Requiem for his good estate. A solemn Requiem is sung at Amiens also. And then, in the first week of September, 1483, the last stage of the journey begins, according to the King's order, expressed long before:

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[6] *"Estoit sur son buffet à l'heure de sa mort, et avoit intention d'en prendre semblable onction qu'il en avoit prins à son sacre, combien que beaucoup de gens cuydoient qu'il s'en voulsist oindre tout de corps, ce qui n'est pas vraysemblable, car ladicte saincte Ampolle est forte petite et n'y a pas grant matiere dedans. Je la veis à l'heure dont je parle, et aussi quant ledict seigneur fut mis en terre à Nostre Dame de Cléry."*—II, 67.

"Since We have had, since Our youth, among the other churches of Our realm, a very particular devotion to that of Our Lady of Cléry, for the reason that whenever We have had recourse to Her, We have found and perceived that Our Lord Jesus Christ, through the mediation of the glorious Virgin Mary, . . . has come to Our relief and granted Us succour in Our Need: for which reason We have ordered our burial in this church. . . ."[7]

While away in Paris the authorities, as perturbed as those of Tours, are mounting guard along the walls, the long, slow funeral procession sets out from Tours along the left bank of the Loire, in the September air, all along that luminous valley, with the meadows and cornfields and vineyards—this year 1483, recalls P. Champion, quoting Guillaume Oudin, was marvelous for the vintage and all other crops—on the one side, on the other the wide silver river with its boats; in every hamlet along the road a tolling of bells and a procession of the inhabitants to pay honor to the corpse; in the city of Blois, halfway towards Cléry, a station for the night, no doubt, amid the mournful *tintamarre* of bronze from every church and convent, and all night long the dirge and vigil as before. At length the church of Cléry rises into sight from its fields, and before the village is reached the Royal Chapter in procession have met their royal brother-canon's body. The nave and choir, hung with black, are full of tapers, full of mourners, noble and

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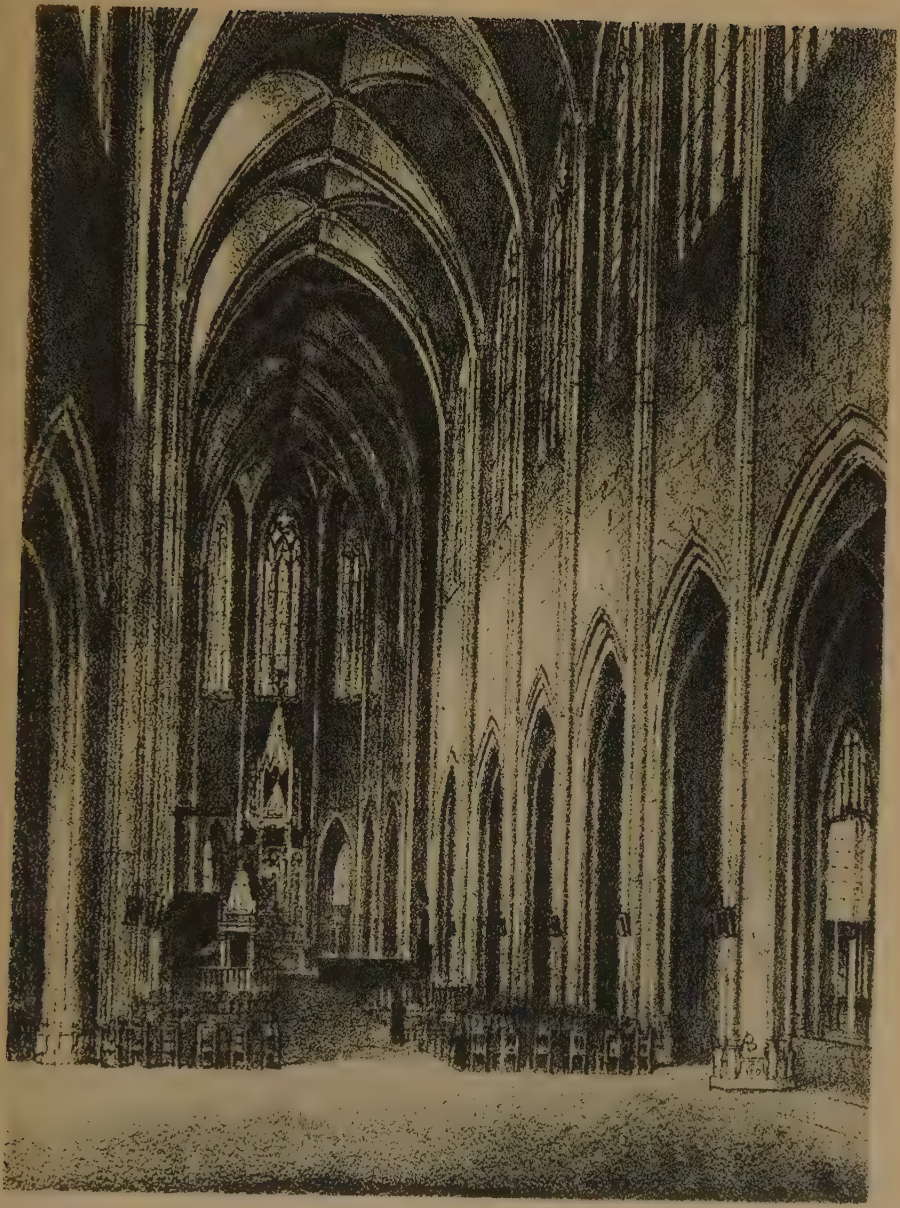
[7] *"Comme dès nostre jeune eage nous ayons, entre les aultres esglises de nostre royaulme, eue très singuliere dévotion à celle de Nostre Dame de Cléry, pour ce que, quand nous y avons eu recours, nous avons trouvé et congneu que Nostre Seigneur Jhesus-Crist par l'intermédiaire de la glorieuse Vierge Marie . . . nous a pourveu et donné remede en nos affaires: parquoy nous avons esleue nostre sepulture en icelle esglise. . . ." Ordonnances des Rois de France,* XVII, 48.



INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF CLÉRY
Showing the statue, and the tomb of Louis XI

From an Engraving of 1850

peasant; and just below the transept, on the north side, obliquely turned towards the statue of Our Lady, kneels the bronze king, awaiting the dead; beneath, the new open vault. The bells toll on in the still sweet air, and the rise and fall of plainsong mixes with their liquid throbbing, the torches flame, the procession halts at the western door. In the garden of the little high-roofed house of mellow brick which the king built for himself, facing the south side of the church (it is still there), birds are twittering and flying and perching in the trellis of his vine, which he ordered Bourré to have planted only a year ago.

The bier of King Louis enters the nave, and is sprinkled with holy water; and the consolations of the Liturgy proceed, whether attended by the military ceremonial which marked the funeral of Dunois in this church a few years before, or—as one or two historians have conjectured, seeing that no account has been handed down—in their own noble simplicity. It is impossible to ignore the presence of the Ampulla, which of itself demanded high reverence; on the other hand, once the Ampulla had been escorted to the high altar the funeral rites could proceed plain enough, and are the same for king or peasant. *De Profundis,* sings the choir, and *Miserere,* those psalms. *"Subvenite sancti Dei,"* chants the officiating priest. "Come to his assistance, all ye saints of God, meet him all ye angels of the Lord, receiving his soul, offering it in the sight of the Most High." And the assistants answer: "May Christ receive thee who hath called thee, and may the angels conduct thee to Abraham's bosom." And the body of King Louis descends at length into the tomb. It is prayed finally, once more, on behalf of this indefatigable traveler and ceaseless toiler, that he may be forgiven his life's sins and granted eternal rest and light perpetual. Outside the open western door, over the sea of heads, the sky is blue, birds sing, the vineyards are ripe to harvest, the countryside of Touraine is bathed in peace; and the artificer of peace, the man who has pulled France out of the mire, lies where he wished to be.

Requiem æternam. "Eternal rest give to him, O Lord." He had not known it much during life.

II

THE TRAMPLED LILIES

"Salvasti enim nos de affligentibus nos, et odientes nos confudisti!"[1]

—Motto of Alain Chartier's "Memorable History of the Great Troubles of this Kingdom under King Charles the Seventh."

§ I

A RECENT historian of the French Revolution,[2] surveying the old régime, propounds (possibly for the first time) an interesting question, as applicable *mutatis mutandis* to the Fifteenth Century as to the Eighteenth. Is it accurate, he asks—is the perpetually-reproduced picture accurate which represents the contrast, the wax-lights and glitter and gaiety of Versailles on the one hand, and on the other, outside the brilliant palace-windows, beyond the great park, a haggard and famished peasantry, bowed to the ground, scratching barely enough from the arid soil to maintain life?

The antithesis is piquant and dramatic, and has appealed to many fervid literary imaginations. A famous passage in La Bruyère, grim and ominous enough, has supplied the text a thousand times. "One sees certain savage animals, male and female," says La Bruyère, "scattered over the countryside, black, livid, burned up by the sun, rooted to a soil which they furrow and dig with invincible doggedness; they have a sort of articulate speech, and when they lift themselves upright they show human features: in fact, they are men. At night they retire to their hovels, where they live on black bread, roots, and water. They spare the rest of mankind the trouble of sowing, laboring, and harvesting, and thus deserve not to be deprived of the bread they have made." [3] From this one source Niagaras of sentimental politico-humanitarianism have flowed, in the Old World and the New. Its authenticity as evidence has been unquestioned, for it is in the nature of sentimentalists to repeat, rather than to examine. Not so the cool historian I have quoted, who points out, before proceeding further, that La Bruyère, writing a century before the Revolution, was a bitter pessimist and moralist, and like all such minds of his age saw a desert in every smiling valley. Those who have written similarly of the French peasant before the Revolution have been for the most part, like La Bruyère, men of letters, Parisians, writing in secluded libraries, as remote from the actualities of the countryside as if it were in China or the moon, taking their impressions of the rural life chiefly from the Arcadian School of pastorals. But the witness of travelers? M. Gaxotte remains unperturbed. For every traveler who sees and depicts misery one may produce another who contradicts him; and this is easily explained, since what do these travelers see except local conditions? In one hour one may pass from a rich and fertile countryside into a vast bleak desert, one day's hailstorms can devastate a whole district, and rarely is one year in the country like another. The facts about the French peasant under the old régime are practically the facts about the French peasant today, with the important exception (adds M. Gaxotte) that under the old régime the nature of the system of taxation laid a deliberate premium on the *appearance* of poverty. Rousseau tells a story of arriving one day at a lonely farm, demanding food. The farmer refuses point-blank and rudely. He has no food. It is all gone. Everything is gone. He has nothing in the world. He is stripped to the bone by the tax-gatherer. Rousseau, extremely hungry, pleads, argues, implores, finally reveals his name. The peasant becomes softer, hesitates, and finally, with infinite precaution, goes tiptoe to a secret cupboard and brings out a sufficient meal of bread, meat, and wine, protesting all the time that if this becomes known outside he is lost. It seems strange that some should have used this story to illustrate the inhuman brutality of the old régime. What it does illustrate exactly is the attitude of the peasant in the face of taxation admittedly heavy, but in the long run no greater a burden than the taxation in most of the countries victorious in the late European War. The peasant is in every age and every country avaricious, secret, cunning, averse to paying taxes if they can be evaded. Under the old régime it had become a necessity to the peasant to profess and parade poverty—as he usually does today, for that matter—meanwhile living *on the average* in no particular discomfort behind the shutters; and he was often able to cheat the taxes for years. The reverse of the La Bruyère medallion is the evidence of *La Vie de Mon Père,* by Restif de la Bretonne,[4] that tempestuous minor Balzac who is very nearly in the front rank. Restif de la Bretonne was the son of a Burgundian peasant. His temperament is not tinged with sentimental pessimism; he is wholly of the soil and brutally a realist; and in this book, his masterpiece, the picture of daily life on his father's farm in Burgundy in the latter half of the seventeenth century—the same period as that gloomed over by La Bruyère—may be taken as the simple truth. Restif's ruddy farm-laborers at their evening meal compare very oddly with the haggard wrecks of

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[1] "For Thou hast saved us from those who afflicted us, and hast confounded those that hate us." (Ps. XLIII.)

[2] M. Pierre Gaxotte.

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[3] *Les Caractères,* XI, 128.

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[4] Published in 1779.

La Bruyère, contemplated from a coach-window through literary spectacles clouded with bile.

The conventional high lights and low darks therefore may be allowed to dwindle into something less dramatic and more conformable with economics and human nature. The condition of France during the reign of Charles VII, which must reasonably prelude any survey of Louis XI's achievements, presents a terribly darker picture of misery and suffering; but although there is no occasion to doubt the evidence of contemporary chroniclers and diarists (for literary humbug about the rural population had not yet assumed any dimensions) it must be strictly borne in mind once more that nowhere are conditions universally alike at one given period, and that, as with the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the fifteenth century medallion has also two sides.

The pages which follow will to a large extent be concerned with the state of France during Louis XI's childhood and youth. The almost superhuman task, begun by Saint Joan, proceeded with by Charles VII, superbly continued and triumphantly concluded by Louis, of pulling France out of the gulf can be estimated from a swift survey of what confronted both men. At Charles' death France was almost on her feet again, but still exhausted, divided, and an easy prey to the enemy, internal and external. Louis XI after twenty-two years' work left France united, full of driving vigor, prosperous, enjoying peace within and without, a new virile nation risen from its ashes and occupying once more the old place in Europe.

It is convenient and necessary first to glance at the general history of France at this period.

The defeat of the flower of the French (that is, Orleanist, Armagnac, Nationalist) chivalry by Henry V of England at

Agincourt in October, 1415, seemed to the observer to sound the passing-bell of the French Monarchy; the more absolutely because the three succeeding heirs to the French throne, the three Dauphins, died within a few months, leaving one child, the fourth son of Charles VI of France, with the right to the throne. Charles VI himself was a lunatic. Madness had come upon him in 1392, in the forest of Le Mans, during an expedition against the English. His four uncles of Burgundy, Berry, Bourbon, and Anjou, who had formed a regency during his minority, hastened to take charge of affairs again; unfortunately for France, for not one of the first three had national interests, and Burgundy was allied to the English. What French nationalism there was in this executive cabinet was supplied by a later arrival, Louis Duke of Orleans, the insane king's brother. Orleans had against him the University of Paris and the power of Burgundy. University, that powerful international-intellectual State within a state, having constituted itself arbiter in the lamentable Papal schism of the moment, had decided that in order to make the two rival Popes come to some agreement and end this painful scandal neither should be obeyed as long as there was one Pope in Rome and another in Avignon. Orleans on the contrary was strongly for the French Pope of Avignon. As for Burgundy, the new Duke, Jean Sans-Peur, was Orleans' bitter enemy, and in 1407 had him assassinated in a Paris street by a gang. Civil war at once broke out between the Orleanists, or Armagnacs—so called after the new Duke Charles of Orleans' marriage into the Armagnac family—and the Burgundians. Paris, which had been cleverly handled by Burgundy, declared for his party. So did University, whose intellectuals were seen joining hands with the butchers' corporation of Paris in fomenting a popular rising in the Burgundian cause. The scenes in the streets are a foretaste of the

Revolution; there is even an attack by the mob on the Bastille and an attempt to seize the young heir to the throne. Meanwhile Henry V, newly succeeded to the English throne, purged of the Rabelaisian pleasures of his youth and inclining to the Imperial or Kipling Ideal, lands an army at Harfleur and defeats the flower of Armagnac chivalry at Agincourt on October 25, 1415: a day of glory for the bowmen of England.

Charles VI being hopelessly insane, with fewer and fewer lucid intervals, and his heir a weak youth, Henry, resuming after a space his attempt on Normandy, put forward his claim to the French Crown; a claim utterly without solid foundation. The Nationalists, smashed at Agincourt and divided among themselves, had no resistance to offer. The Burgundians in Paris opened the city gates to Jean Sans-Peur, and again the streets flowed with blood. Two massacres of Armagnacs and the spectacle of children dragging corpses up and down the streets at their play once more prefigure the Jacobin Terror. There is no government in France. Burgundy, abetted by the Queen, that German harlot Ysabeau of Bavaria, holds the mad King in his hands and speaks in his name. The young Dauphin Charles, with a handful of loyalists, quits Paris to save his life and takes refuge in the kindly Loire country at Bourges. Jean Sans-Peur is killed in a quarrel at the bridge-head of Montereau, where some sort of negotiations between the Dauphin's party and the Burgundians have begun, and the new Duke of Burgundy, Philip the Good, opens the gates of Paris to Henry V, who has all this while been proceeding methodically with his conquest of Normandy.

The treaty of Troyes (May 20, 1420) takes the throne from Charles VI and gives the Regency to Henry V, with succession to the French throne; and moreover, Charles VI amid his delusions has signed, or been persuaded to sign, a document in which his son and heir, the disinherited Dauphin Charles, is styled "the so-called Dauphin"—a grievous enough imputation on his legitimacy. On December 1, 1420, Henry V enters Paris side by side with Charles VI, now his father-in-law, amid the acclamations of the Parisians, who, sick of bloodshed within the walls, would have welcomed the Devil himself. Charles VI dies in 1422, Henry V, King of France and England, in the same year; and on December 16, 1431, Henry's son, the gentle saint Henry VI, then a child of nine, is crowned King of France at Notre Dame. The actual ruler in Paris is Henry V's brother, the Duke of Bedford, Regent during the child King's minority; a genius alike in war and statesmanship.

We have therefore on the one hand the English established in Paris, the Ile-de-France, Normandy, Picardy, Champagne, Guyenne, and part of the Loire country, in all the insolence of wealth and conquest,[5] and the Burgundians in Burgundy, the Franche-Comté, and Flanders; and on the other hand the pitiable figure of the rightful King of France, "king of Bourges, king of Gonesse," as his enemies call him derisively, living with a handful of loyalists at Bourges, the center of his diminished dominions, in shabby gentility, pawning the Crown jewels, patching old doublets, borrowing money from the lower servants, and being refused credit by tradesmen. Charles VII, uncrowned, indolent, temperamental, nervous, shambling, subject to melancholia, is not yet the Charles whom the faith and pure flame of St. Joan will at length shake from his lethargy.

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[5] Guyenne, the rich Bordeaux country, with the great port of Bordeaux, was especially an English stronghold, administered with supreme skill, and valuable by reason of its wines and produce. It is a tribute to the English government of Guyenne that the inhabitants, whose every privilege and susceptibility had been carefully respected and whose prosperity had been encouraged in every way, were reluctant to exchange the English administration for the French. The loss of this country after 300 years' occupation was one of the three major blows which broke the English domination in France: the other two were the loss of Normandy and the successes of St. Joan.

At this moment, indeed, he is a contemptible figure, flabby, mournful, indecisive, sunk in despairs, the easy prey of the more unscrupulous of his followers, who take advantage of his helplessness to make themselves practically independent. The House of France, one would say, has definitely crumbled into bankruptcy, and the bailiffs are in.

§2

The present state of the countryside of France is painted in the darkest colors in the Latin chronicle of Thomas Basin, Bishop of Lisieux, an efficient and honest man whose troubled career may be examined with interest later in these pages. Basin's diatribes against Louis XI, his vindictive enemy and persecutor, do not affect the admitted accuracy of his record of things seen.

The immense scourge of a great part of the French countryside at this time is the international ruffianism of the *routiers,* the mercenaries, men-at-arms employed by all parties, the sweepings of the streets and prisons of Europe. These are let loose by their employers, English, French, Burgundians indifferently, to live on the countryside when they cannot get their pay. From their habit of holding up travelers and stripping them to the skin they are also called the Flayers, *écorcheurs.* They are the Nyms and Pistols and Bardolphs of the age, holding a perpetual reign of terror over the French peasantry, robbing, raping, burning farms, torturing and cutting throats in a methodical manner. One single example of their activities is seen between the years 1443 and 1445 at the village of Neuville-sur-Saône, which is disputed by the *routiers* of Charles

VII and of Savoy respectively; six times the village is taken and retaken, and six times sacked amid barbarities more savage, says a chronicler, than those employed by the Saracen against Christian prisoners. Nor is this an isolated incident. Other villages are sacked or burned to the ground by the *routiers,* the men tortured or killed, the women raped, the livestock driven away. Outside the gates of Sens the Archbishop himself is held up by a band of these ruffians, robbed of all he possesses, and forced to seek safety in the town on foot. In the Rouergue the peasants, in order to harvest their crops, pay for the protection of armed men supplied by the Flayers themselves; these men stand by them in the fields as they work. Testimony to the procedure of the bandits is given by Nicolas Clemengis, the elegant Latin scholar, writing to the great Gerson. "They resemble wolves more than men. They leave nothing in the houses they pillage, not a hen, not a chicken, not a cock: and what slaughter of goats, calves, and lambs when they invade a hamlet, like a whirlwind or a storm! Their first proceeding is to visit the houses, breaking in all doors at the least resistance; they ransack all coffers, chests, cabinets, cupboards, rooms, beds, nooks, and corners, taking all they find; they take not only men's clothing but women's, and leave behind them no wine, barley, or kitchen utensils—these they often dash to pieces against the walls under the goodman's eyes. Some of them even destroy the women's beds and fling the feathers to the winds." The preacher Friar Michel Menot adds: "They beat the owner of the house while they devour his goods, and if there is a girl in the house, she must come to them, and they take her without her poor father's daring to say a word." And Menot sums up tersely: "The men-at-arms are ministers of the Devil; their church is the tavern; their office is to blaspheme the name of God; their Books of Hours are cards and gambling; and dice serve them for a rosary. O madmen, wretches, will you place your swords at the throat of Christ?" And as if this were not sufficient, certain impoverished lords, taking advantage of the anarchy of the time, turn brigand themselves: for example, Jean de Grailly, a count of the great house of Foix, whose men hold Languedoc to ransom in 1436, robbing travelers at the very gates of Toulouse. Among the bandits executed periodically in Paris in the years immediately following Charles VII's entry there is more than one man of family. "Item," writes the Bourgeois of Paris in his journal in 1422, "the Saturday after the coming of the King and Queen, which was the twenty-fifth of September, there was beheaded and quartered at the Halles one Messire de Boqueaux, chevalier, a great landowner and seigneur, who was one of the governors of the accursed bands; and he confessed that through him there had been killed and murdered more than six or seven hundred men, laborers and others, in addition to the firing of houses, pillaging of churches, and violating of virgins, religious women and others. He was one of the leaders in the sack of Soissons." In September 1432, again, the Bourgeois records that the English have seized the Seigneur de Massy, "the cruellest tyrant in France," and a hundred brigands with him, one of whom has confessed to having thrown seven men into a well and slain them by hurling stones upon them. Eloquent figures are quoted by Petit-Dutaillis revealing the state of France at this time. Under the burden of the appalling conditions the peasantry in some districts desert the villages in droves and emigrate across the border into foreign territory. Part of the population of Lyons in this way transfers itself into the Empire. Between Seine, Oise, and Somme there are no fields whatever under cultivation, and the main roads are deserted and covered with grass. Towards 1435 the town of Limoges, ruined almost completely, contains exactly five inhabitants. In the village of Saillagol in Quercy there is one woman, in the village of Cazals one man. The population of St. Gilles in Languedoc drops from 10,000 to 400. In the cathedral town of Beauvais hedges grow in the streets. The diocese of Rouen, containing 221 parishes, had a population in the thirteenth century of 15,000; at this time it has dropped to about six thousand. In 1439, at the assembly of the States of Orleans, representatives of the University of Paris urgently declare that if there is not soon a cessation of hostilities, internal and external, the French will be forced to desert France altogether. The pages of Thomas Basin show that the life of the countryside in civilized France at this time closely resembles that of the Scottish Highlands at the wildest period of clan warfare. Whenever the peasants venture into the fields they post a sentinel on the church tower or some commanding eminence, and at the first glimpse of a distant troop of men-at-arms a bell is rung or a horn is blown; and not only do the peasants hasten back to safety, relative or absolute, but (says Basin) the very cattle and sheep and geese and pigs are familiar with the signal and come hurrying to cover at the first warning. The fate of those peasants who delay is certain. They are caught, haled away to the marauding party's quarters, and either released sooner or later on ransom or suffered to die from exposure, disease, or starvation. It is obvious that the only cultivation possible is that of fields in the immediate neighborhood of a strong castle or a fortified town.

In Normandy, under the English rule, numbers of the ruined peasantry break for the forests and, joining themselves with revolted gentlemen and monks driven from sacked or ruined abbeys, carry on a guerilla warfare against the English, ambushing parties of men-at-arms, raiding villages, haunting forests and caves and hills, and giving the English generally a foretaste of the Peninsular War. These guerillas the English mercilessly hunt down with dogs. In one year ten thousand of them are captured and put to death; but their bands do not diminish.

It has been observed that certain impoverished French lords betook themselves to pillaging. There is one brigand of the time who is, in his splendor, dignity, wealth and courtesy, worthy of his title of Emperor of Bandits (*Empereur des Pillards*). This is Rodriguo de Villandrando, a Castilian whose ancestors lie in the church of Valladolid, who has married into the Bourbon family, on the left-hand or illegitimate side. Rodriguo de Villandrando is one of the bravest and most skillful of the *condottieri* of all time. He rules his bandits with an iron hand; his traveling court is princely in magnificence; he has a chancellery and gold plate of the richest; at times he even lends money to needy French barons. And he is a gentleman, a highwayman of the type of which Claude Duval, two centuries later, will be a pale shadow. In 1437, when the young newly-married Dauphin Louis and his father are making their progress into Languedoc, they cross the orbit of Villandrando's bandits, who are laying waste all before them. At Saint-Flour the King's officials sent ahead to prepare lodgings are set upon and beaten by Villandrando's men and their convoy looted; but the Queen and the Dauphine, at the prayer of the citizens of Tours, have written to Villandrando begging him not to visit Touraine, and the great brigand courteously accedes to the ladies' wishes, declaring himself their humble servant. The fact that Charles VII immediately sets out in pursuit and chases Villandrando back beyond the Rhône into Imperial territory does not spoil the grace of this self-denial.

The tale of the plagues of France is not yet complete. Over and above the Flayers and the pillaging lords and Villandrando there were close corporations and freemasonries of blackguards in various districts, exploiting each their own chosen territory. There are the Gypsies, who seem to have appeared in Germany from the East towards 1417, and are now trooping over France like locusts, exercising all the Romany arts, thieving, horse-coping, charlatanry, child-stealing, and kindred industries. The Bourgeois of Paris very interestingly describes their advent into the capital in the August of 1427: the men very dark, with crisp curly hair, the women the ugliest one could wish to see, and the darkest—*les plus laides femmes que on peust veoir et les plus noires.* Their fortune-telling soon attracts the foolish, though the essence of it (observes the Bourgeois) is to inform husbands: "Your wife is cuckolding you," and wives: "Your husband is unfaithful." And it is soon discovered that "either by art-magic, or by the wiles of the Enemy, or by skilful fingering," the client generally returns home without his purse. This comes swiftly to the ears of the authorities, and in September the gypsies, having been excommunicated (with their silly prey) by the Bishop of Paris, move on, along the road to Pontoise. In the Ile de France there is arrested in 1449 a small but peculiarly horrible band of half-maniac ruffians, male and female, called the Caymans. They have their own King and Queen, and specialize in stealing young children from fairs, pardons and any country assemblies, and mutilating them for begging purposes. In the Velay, again, there is a highly organized company of thieves called the *secte de crocheterie,* who specialize in breaking into churches and robbing shrines and reliquaries of their jewels and gold. And then, more powerful and honorable than these, because one of the greatest names in literature attaches to them, there are the Coquillards, who infest the country round Dijon, and have branches in Paris and the Ile de France, in Champagne, the Orléanais, Languedoc, and part of Anjou. Of their company is François Villon.

The courageous night assault of Master Jehan Rabustel, Procurator-Syndic of Dijon, on the stronghold of these blackguards at Dijon in 1455, and their subsequent capture, trial, and punishment, reveals the nature of their discipline. They had a King, called the King of Coquille. They had a secret language, the Jargon, *un langaige exquis que aultres gens ne scevent entendre,* a language in which Villon wrote half a dozen Ballades which have remained for the greater part completely sealed and unintelligible. They had their own statutes and police, and each of their companies operated independently, like Chinese armies. Their *cadre* was composed of Flayers and miscellaneous criminal riff-raff, the scum of all the towns of Europe: the roll-call of Master Rabustel contains seventy-seven names, including many Gascons, a Spaniard, an Italian, a Savoyard, and a Scotsman. Their hierarchy was composed of the *gascâtres,* or neophytes, the *maistres,* or masters, and the *longs,* the most desperate and most skilled, *biens subtilz.* Like the Flayers they practiced indifferently any form of robbery or murder, but they had specialists among them also—the *vendengeurs,* who cut purses, the *beffleurs,* card-sharpers and dice-coggers, the *blancs coulons,* who lay at inns disguised as merchants and robbed genuine merchants, passing the booty to confederates and raising a loud complaint next day, and the *envoyeurs,* whose simple mission it was to send their victims neatly from this world. In the seven Ballades of the Jargon, which are like a grotesque jig round the gibbet, François Villon calls to his comrades with a whoop:

Vive David! saint archequin la baboue!
Iehan mon amy, qui les feuilles desnoue,
Le vendengeur, beffleur comme une choue,

Loing de son plain, de ses floz curieulx,
Noe beaucop, dont il recoit fressoue,
Jonc verdoiant, havre des marieux!

And again:

Spelicans,
Qui en tous temps
Avancez dedens le pogois,
Gourde piarde,
Et sur la tarde,
Desbousez les povres nyois,
Et pour soustenir voz pois
Les duppes sont privez de caire,
Sans faire haire,
Ne hault braire,
Mais plantez ilz sont comme joncs
Pour les sires qui sont si longs!

of which ballade the Envoi is such an antic hay:

De paour des hurmes,
Et des grumes,
Rassurez voz en droguerie
Et faierie,
Et ne soiez plus sur les joncs
Pour les sires qui sont si longs![6]

The daily routine of the Coquillards of Dijon is duly set forth in Master Rabustel's dossiers. Their headquarters are a brothel kept by one Jacquot de la Mer, from which they issue, some to pick locks and break into houses, others to coin and to cheat money-changers, others to pass false money and jewelry, others to rob in the streets of Dijon in broad daylight, others to play with cogged dice and marked cards, others to lie in wait to rob and murder on the roads or to lie in ambush in the woods and coppices. They return to the brothel with their booty, drink and gamble and fight and brawl, squander what they have, extract by force from the wretched prostitutes, their doxies, what other money is available, squander it, and disappear again, to return in a week or two with fresh money, horses, baggage, and miscellaneous loot.

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[6] These verses are practically untranslatable. A survey of various attempts to elucidate them is made in "François Villon." (Coward-McCann, New York, 1928.)

The Companions of Dijon suffered severely, their leaders being hanged (or, if convicted of coining, as the law required) boiled in oil, and the rest banished. Among their number is a friend and close associate of Villon, a blackguard of good family, Regnier de Montigny, who escapes this time, to hang two years later. Another of Villon's bosom friends, also a choice villain, is a Coquillard: Colin des Cayeulx, also hanged in due course.

Such, then, is the spectacle offered by the land of France in the first three-quarters of Charles VII's reign: anarchy, plunder, bloodshed, and every evil that can fall on a distracted nation. On the one hand the invader, repressing with an iron hand, on the other hand the helpless ineffective King, with a handful of followers who exploit his weakness; and on every side marauding bands, employed by the great barons in their quarrels and cynically turned off at intervals to prey on the countryside. Of the violent and quarrelsome great lords, it is interesting to note, the majority were, like the violent Italian princes of the Renaissance, men of cultivated tastes, Epicureans, æsthetes, patrons of letters—Jean II, Duke of Bourbon, for example, a minor poet and a temporary protector of Villon during his vagabondage up and down France; Pierre II, Duke of Brittany; the great Philip of Burgundy, "Grand Duke of the West," a poet himself *à ses heures,* and a splendid patron. René, "Good King René," the gentle King of Anjou and Sicily, not only writes very passable pastoral verse but paints pictures which, it seems (for none has survived) revealed considerable amateur talent; he is also a musician, a critic, and a friend to all sons of the Muses. And one of the most sombre and celebrated figures of this age, Marshal Gilles de Rais, the famous Gilles de Rais, the Bluebeard of nursery legend, is not only an eminent soldier but a man of handsome presence and polite attainments, who speaks and reads Latin with ease and fluency.

The story of this personage, a phenomenon in his or any age, remains a bogey-tale even when stripped of the legends. He fought with gallantry at Saint Joan's side, was made a marshal by Charles VII at Rheims, on his coronation day, and afterwards retiring to his lands in Brittany, gave himself over to sinister amusements, surrounding himself with Italian astrologers and the pseudo-scientific quacks who were found in his age as in ours, but with less authority, and who encouraged and assisted him in his two darling projects: the discovery of the Philosopher's Stone and the raising of the Devil. In neither was he successful. Over-indulgence in wine heated his already unbalanced mind and hurried him to catastrophe. The document presenting the evidence at his trial for sorcery, followed by his burning at the stake in 1440, are almost fantastic—or would be so, did not satanism exist still. The practice of the black arts and the scientific cult of the Devil are not extraordinary to anyone acquainted with Huysmans' *Lá-Bas* or the performances of a modern personage of Anglo-Saxon nationality whose orgies at Capri and elsewhere are sufficiently notorious. Gilles de Rais had the advantage over this enthusiast of being able to go further. The anarchy of the time made it possible, between 1432 and 1440, for his agents to kidnap from the countryside some hundred and forty children, some of whom were hanged, others of whom had their throats cut, amid the prescribed cabbalistic rites. There is the true nursery fireside thrill in the story of his horrible emissary, the old woman called La Meffraie, who, with half her face shrouded in a black veil, went padding softly to and fro about the fields and lanes and woods, on the lookout for children keeping sheep, lost, or straying. To such children she would address herself with smiles and becks and honeyed words, like the authentic witch of fairy tales all the world over; and very soon, hand in hand, she and her prey would set out for one of Bluebeard's castles, after which the child would never be seen again. Gilles de Rais himself advanced in scientific research from cutting throats to propitiate the Devil to cutting throats to please himself. The monster of Perrault's fairy story, founded on his fame, is as mild as a chartered accountant in comparison; and though this was a period of tough nerves and accustomed to violence one may still hear the gasp of incredulity and horror with which Jean V of Brittany and the Bishop of Nantes heard at length of these *esbatemens.* The fury and anguish of the parents cry out today from the pages of the evidence. It is only just to add that the Marshal did not take part in that foul and terrible parody called the Black Mass, described by Huysmans and currently performed by modern satanists. Indeed, so complex is human nature, so odd its paradoxes, that Gilles de Rais mingled with sadism and sorceries a great deal of fervent, mystical, and obviously sincere piety. His end was exemplary in its penitence. In the meadow near Nantes where the sentence of burning at the stake was carried out—he was accorded the favor, in consideration of his military record, of strangling before the fire—an immense crowd gathered, bathed in tears, reciting prayers and the penitential psalms for the soul of the repentant sinner.

The misery of the French peasantry at this time would seem intolerable, yet the picture of their state cannot be painted unrelievedly black. There were villages untouched by the marauders, in which the quiet labor of the fields alternated with those rustic merrymakings of which we of the mechanical age have lost the secret. There were some untouched monasteries and convents in which discipline was not slackened and the daily routine of prayer and intellectual and manual labor not interrupted. There were houses and gardens in which men and women loved and laughed and made holiday. Within the ramparts of a town (and it is significant that at the truce of 1444 whole populations poured excitedly from walled towns into the surrounding fields and woods, which a generation of them had never seen) there were frequent performances of mistery plays and interludes proper to the seasons, performed by the guilds. Life goes on. Three centuries later, in the torment of the worst days of Terror, the terrible Danton, being in love with a girl who holds stubbornly to the Faith, seeks a priest in hiding to marry him, and is married by stealth, with infinite precautions, in an upper room, with the sacrament of the Church he is vowed to destroy. Life goes on, birds nest near howitzers, daily shell-fire at last becomes a matter of indifference to villagers. So in this welter of fifteenth-century anarchy, before Charles VII bestirred himself to reconquer and rule, before Louis XI pulled France finally out of the mire and gave her peace and the return to prosperity, the prevailing darkness was shot here and there with brighter colors. Certainly the Catholic Church, throughout the darkest ages the champion and guard of the poor, as of arts, letters and even sport,[7] afforded more kinds of consolation than one. The village green is as much part of the essential medieval *décor* as the village church, and a game of *paume,* or rackets, at this period the favorite game of kings and peasants alike, might very well alleviate life's burdens for an hour or two. I find, incidentally, that the fifteenth century produced its Suzanne Lenglen: a twenty-eight-year-old woman named Margot, amateur racket champion of Hainault, who in due course arrived, in the Lenglen manner, in Paris, where she vanquished the best men players of the day on the courts of the Petit-Temple. The Bourgeois of Paris judiciously appraises her game in his Journal: her forward and back-hand strokes were delivered *très puissanment, très malicieusement, très abillement*—very powerfully, very cunningly, and very cleverly. Jousting, which had earlier in the Middle Ages been the game of the aristocracy, was now less dangerous and a game for the middle class also, played with great assiduity and fervor by the bourgeoisie. Some other country amusements may be found in the long list of the games of Gargantua. At great feasts like Christmas men of every degree in town and country alike gave themselves as much as possible to mirth and gambols long since lost.

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[7] A specialist in the history of sport, M. de Coubertin, has remarked that the medievals' devotion to sports was probably even greater than that of the Greeks. This devotion was fostered partly by feudal custom and partly by the Church.

It is instructive to compare the state of the industrial workman then and now. Mining was a valuable and protected industry in medieval France, and the mines do not seem to have suffered from the welter of the unhappy times we are considering. The coal mines of Languedoc, for example, which were worked by a company as far back as the year 1237, were still flourishing under Charles VII and Louis XI. The silver, copper and lead mines of the Lyonnais and Beaujolais were farmed out by Charles VII to the great banker and capitalist Jacques Coeur, and the miners in Jacques Coeur's employ were as much the (rightly) spoiled children of industry as they are under the modern system. Their wages were high. Their lodging, a common lodging, was comfortable. Their food was extremely good. They received free light, heat, clothing, and laundry. They received free medical service, and their religious needs were fully supplied. Then as now the mining township grew round the mine, though the industry was not then sufficiently developed to permit of the multiplication of those obscene smears on God's fair earth which are the great modern mining towns. The miners in Jacques Coeur's employ had special facilities for acquiring cheaply the land round their settlement and cultivating it in their leisure. They were safeguarded economically by being forbidden to draw their wages in advance; they were safeguarded morally by being forbidden to bring light women into their lodging.

This is not a social-economic essay, and the rest of this survey of French industry at this period may be abbreviated. When the Hundred Years' War ended the economic condition of the peasantry was not utterly bad. Serfdom was practically ended,[8] and labor on the land was at a premium. Charles VII exempted from taxes emigrated peasants who returned to struggle with their ruined acres. Such overlords as the Abbot of St. Germain-des-Prés would enfranchise three villages at a blow; indeed, mass-enfranchisement took place all over France. What a tiny group of the clearest minds in England are preaching today, the Distributive State, began to take shape; for although land might be divided into small strips, and perhaps not "every rood of ground maintained its man," the numbers of peasants owning their own land grew and grew. Moreover, the returning peasants could, and (as might be expected) did take advantage of the situation to demand their own terms from landowners. But Arcadia did not arrive at once, the agricultural renaissance was slow, and the outlook of those farmers who began to take their land in hand at this time must have been disheartening in the extreme as they stood and contemplated the wreck of their farms and fields, the thick brush and woodland and tangle covering once-fertile soil, the rubble and rubbish which was once a village, the overgrown roads; yet the tenacity of the French peasant—you see it today in his square solid features—prevailed. There was a village in the Gâtinais which after the wars fairly resembled a village of the Somme in the year 1918. In 1450 one of its inhabitants returned, accompanied by two laborers; and these three doggedly attacked the desolation before them, aided by the village priest, who arrived before long and, having no house to live in, took up his quarters underneath the steeple in his ruined church. This instance might be multiplied by hundreds; but the work was uphill, and Louis XI himself, spurring from Genappe on the road to Rheims to his coronation, fresh from the wealth and fatness of the Low Countries, was struck by the starved bleakness of the country across the French border. Basin devotes a dark page to it.

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[8] Is it necessary to observe that the serf was not a slave? His seigneur had fixed obligations towards him, beyond those of aid and protection. If, on the other hand, the serf was obliged to remain on his land and could own no property (this harsh law was considerably relaxed during the centuries), he enjoyed what was considerably worth having: security, certainty of food and lodging, light and fire, which advantages in the wilder periods made his lot relatively enviable. For the most part there was a bond of personal union, sometimes affection, between the seigneur and the serf. Many examples of this occur. More than once serfs rose in a body to deliver their seigneur from imprisonment. One also finds serfs refusing to obey unreasonable orders from the seigneur, and successfully upholding their right so to do. What the serfs remaining in France at the beginning of Charles VII's reign chiefly disliked about their condition was its social handicap: there is an oddly suburban note in the complaint that their daughters were considered (as the Birmingham phrase goes) "no class," and eligible young peasants looked down their noses at them.

Towards the end of Louis XI's reign, in 1480, there appeared at Toulouse, among the first fruits of the new art of printing, a shepherds' calendar, *Le Grant Kalendrier et Compost des Bergiers,* the oldest French rural almanac; a precious indication, with its sixty woodcuts, its rhymes—among them verses of Villon and Martial d'Auvergne—its fragrant serenity, its quaint cookery recipes, homely medical remedies, surgical, veterinary, astronomical, astrological, bird, animal, and weather lore, and its deep piety, of the restoration of country life after Louis had established peace throughout France. There arises from the *Grant Kalendrier* none of those long plaints and cries of a miserable nation which make the literature of the previous reign so depressing;[9] its pages smell of new-mown hay, violets, wild thyme, verbena, the good fragrance of freshly-ploughed earth, the aroma of wood-smoke rising from the chimneys of men's homes; they echo the twitter of birds and the soft lowing of cattle, they exhale the content of the quiet fields, the stout daily labor with plough and crook and hoe, the return at evening and the lighting of lamps under the eaves. The anonymous author dwells lovingly on the honor of the shepherd's estate (*l'honneur et estat de bergerie*), seasoning his discourse from Holy Writ: his object, he explains in a brief preface, is to show the shepherd not only how to live long, healthily, and joyously, but to prepare himself for inevitable Death and the greater joys of Paradise beyond. And he includes in his work the ordinary vernacular prayers, the Paternoster (which is also repeated in English, in a woodcut of Our Lord and the Apostles: *Oure father yat ys in hevvyn, holy be mayd thy nam,* etc.), the *Ave Maria,* the Creed, a little treatise on the Virtues, on Purgatory, and on Hell, with some realistic pictures; and beyond these an exquisite little Christmas mistery in verse in which the shepherds Aloris, Ysambert, Pellion, and Rifflart seek Our Lady and the new-born Child and offer rustic gifts—

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[9] The man of war comes into the *Grant Kalendrier,* but only as an example enhancing the shepherd's pride in his calling. "The shepherd is as nobly furnished with his crook, in his condition of shepherdy," says the author, "as a bishop or an abbot with his crozier, or a good stout man-at-arms with his sword." The shepherd's knife, likewise, is not for his enemies but for removing sheep-scab. Times have changed since the days of Charles VII.

a flageolet, a rattle which goes *clic, clic,* a kalendar with bright pictures, a little bell "which hangs in my hat ever since the time of Robin Fouet," and a fine whirligig, the best gift that could possibly be chosen by any shepherd or shepherdess in the world. The *Grant Kalendrier des Bergiers* is one of the most childlike (but not childish), tender, and beautiful books that have ever been made, and a significant incidental tribute to the achievement of Louis XI. *"Deus,"* one can almost hear the author saying, with the shepherd Tityrus, *"nobis hæc otia fecit!"*

In the towns the Guild System still prevailed, with its excellences and its drawbacks; the corporations had by this time tightened and narrowed their regulations, and the advancement of the apprentice encountered many obstacles, since it was to the interest of masters to employ cheap labor. The independent trades, which flourished more commonly than has been supposed, were closely supervised by municipal or royal authorities. The wage of the average workman at the time fluctuated much as it does today; but it is to be remembered that though he earned less than he does now, he then required less. The industrial capitalist system had not yet crushed out of him a capacity for simple and communal pleasure. Everywhere there were *sociétés joyeuses,* everywhere games flourished—bowls, skittles, rackets; there were pageants at Royal entries, and the popular festivals of the Church were frequent and wholeheartedly celebrated. The tavern (which was a tavern then) was a club of the poor, and naturally enough the moralists are found crying out against rioting and drunkenness, brawling and oaths, and all that jolly crapulous uproar we see and hear in the great tavern scene of Glutton's fall in Piers Plowman, and the Falstaff scenes in "Henry VI," and, most Hogarthian of all in its etching, in Skelton's rattling doggerel concerning

Elynour Rumming the fat ale-wife of Leatherhead in Surrey, who

. . . breweth nappy ale
To make thereof pot-sale
To trauellers and tinkers,
To sweaters and swinkers,
And all good ale drinkers,
That will nothing spare,
But drink till they stare,
Come whoso will
To Elynour on the hill
With fill the cup, fill,
And sit thereby still;
Early and late,
Thither comes Kate,
Cicely, and Sare,
With their legs bare,
And also their feete,
Hardly unsweete;
With their heels dagged,
Their kirtles all to jagged,
Their smockes all to ragged,
With titters and tatters,
Bring dishes and platters,
With all their might running
To Elynour Rumming
To haue of her tunning . . .

But this long and hearty piece is not for genteel stomachs, even as Elynour's ale, which was not the liquid we drink today in England, to the comfort and enrichment of chemical manufacturers.

By way of contrast, the figure of Jacques Coeur, the medieval Rothschild, the Superman of Big Business, may be profitably contemplated for a moment. His splendid palace at Bourges still stands to witness to the excellence of fifteenth century domestic architecture. Jacques Coeur could teach any financial swaggerer in Anglo-Saxondom today the elements of amassing enormous wealth, and some aspects of his career, indeed, miraculously resemble those of more than one admired capitalist of our own age. He was completely unscrupulous, and was brought to trial in 1429, early in his career, for being a partner in a scandalous scheme for issuing bad money. (One must freely admit that in that imperfect age such men could be brought to trial; one will not presume to allege that there is no such thing as Progress.) He escaped with a fine, and three years later set on foot the trade with the East which built up his immense fortune, made him the most powerful man in France, a counsellor to the King, and the holder of state offices enabling him, by business methods which need not be enlarged upon, to increase his influence and fortune still further. Jacques Coeur was certainly as indispensable and as great a social menace as any other man of his kind; and France owes him a considerable debt, for he laid the foundation of her communication with the Orient. He surrounded himself with a carefully selected, skilled, and devoted staff. His fleets exported French goods to the East and brought back carpets from Persia, perfumes from Arabia, spices and porcelain from the Far East, furs from the North, every kind of goods from Alexandria and Beyrouth and all the Levantine ports; and he added to this trade the profitable transport of pilgrims and slaves. Together with Charles VII he brought about commercial treaties, or addenda to treaties, with Denmark, Germany, Switzerland, and Castile, which combated piracy and opened new avenues to commerce. He was a great banker and money-lender, a financier with tentacles spreading everywhere, princely in his habits. When the crash came and he was involved in a political plot (so Charles VII firmly believed) and the death of Agnes Sorel, the King made no attempt to save him from his enemies, and he went into exile. It was Louis XI who rehabilitated his memory and reſtored the family eſtates to his son; not, as may well be gathered, for sentimental reasons.

Contemplation of Jacques Coeur's Gothic mansion at Bourges, with its towers and chapel and great hall, leads to the logical conclusion that the world was becoming safe for super-financiers in the late fifteenth century. An earlier king of Charles VII's line had hanged a few, to the solace and delight of the populace. Now progress had definitely set in.

§ 3

An essay on the Automobile which omitted all mention of the engine would probably be considered eccentric. It is therefore essential to glance a moment at the condition, in fifteenth-century France, of the machinery which provided the motive power for so much more than the spiritual life of the age: the Catholic Church, provider of medicine and consolation for soul and body alike, patron of learning and the liberal and fine arts, the gateway to opportunity even for the pooreſt, the fortress of the oppressed, the universal Mother.

It is a commonplace in the hiſtory of the Church that she is continually disappointing those of her enemies who at regular intervals moſt hopefully await her end. Two supreme inſtances readily occur. Juſt before the French Revolution no outside spectator of intelligence considered the Faith as anything but a dead thing, an obsolete formula of merely antiquarian intereſt, to which a very few among the educated still adhered, for profit or else through sheer eccentricity. The Jacobin Terror was to have ſtamped the last veſtiges of it out in France, juſt as three centuries of less spectacular but more dogged action—the "barbarous debilitating policy" which aroused the noble indignation of Dr. Johnson—by English Governments was to have stamped it out in Ireland, just as the Elizabethan and Jacobean Terror and the Penal Laws were to have stamped it out in England. But (as they used to sing at St. Merry before the Concordat swept away the old breviaries of Paris), *"Navis Petri non quassatur."* It is an historical curiosity, to those who regard this Thing as a human invention, that immediately after each apparent disaster there has followed a vigorous upthrust. Today the thrust following the eighteenth-century depression is still developing, and not in France alone.

It is interesting to establish this mathematical conclusion before proceeding to a brief survey of the condition of the Church in France in the fifteenth century; a condition as low in some aspects, humanly speaking, as could be imagined; but with an essential reservation, which shall be indicated in its due place. In the first half of this fierce and disorderly century the Church in France took her full share of damage, material and moral. There is the aftermath of the forty-years' Papal Schism—one Pope in Rome, another in Avignon—which had ended in 1417. There is the enormous scandal of lay patronage, which is responsible for the greater part of the disorders of the time. A letter of Nicolas Clemengis, the Latin scholar, one time Rector of the University of Paris, to his master, the great Gerson, has already been quoted for its reference to the Flayers. In another letter Clemengis gives vent to indignation which accurately reflects the feeling of every devout soul of his time. "The greatest scourge of God's Church," he cries, "the source and germ of all disorders, is that men ignorant of Christ's law, having no God but their belly and their money-bags, raise themselves to the pastoral office and dignity through the powerful intervention of princes! Thence comes the ruin of the Church!" The remarkable friar Olivier Maillard, whose figure is portrayed at length in another page, echoes this cry. The scandal, indeed, is great. Simony, pluralism, and absenteeism prevail almost as in the eighteenth century. Rich benefices and high office are given to men with no pretense to a religious vocation, who spend their revenues in extravagant living. The higher offices in the Church become a preserve for some members of noble families, and accumulation of wealth in a few of the greater monasteries multiplies false vocations in a vicious circle. There are some convents for the nobility in which the nuns (says Pépin, a moralist of the period) call themselves not *Sisters* but *Mesdames,* and wear not the habit of their Order but the fashionable dress of the world, with long trains, like peacocks. There are some prelates with curled hair and hanging sleeves, Court fashion, who flaunt their luxury in the face of the world and remain laymen in appearance and behavior. There are politicians in ecclesiastical livery, like Cardinal Balue, whose private life is as debauched as that of any loose seigneur of the age, or politician of any. There are abbots who never leave Court, while their monks starve in the country. But one must strictly beware of considering these types as a majority.

There is another obvious factor in this degeneracy of the machinery of the Church in France: the Hundred Years' War, which left in its wake wholesale desolation and destruction of monasteries and churches, chantries and shrines. The case of the small abbey of La Roche, cited by Petit-Dutaillis, is typical. In May 1459 Archdeacon de Josas, making a visitation, finds the abbey deserted, with no soul to receive him; finds the cloisters unroofed and the abbey church falling into ruin, with the Tabernacle on the high altar empty and open. He rides on, and presently summons the abbot of La Roche before the ecclesiastical court of the diocese; and the unhappy abbot explains that he is still in residence in his abbey, but alone, and keeping himself from starvation by the sale of what remains of the plate, the sacred vessels, books, and even tiles from the crumbling roof. Such houses, almost or wholly dead, the lands from which they drew their revenue a desert, their treasuries looted of the pious gifts of generations, their community dispersed to the winds, were numerous. Those communities which remained were cut off from the generating-system and power-station of the monastic life—the periodical Chapter-General—by the state of the roads of France, which made traveling dangerous or impossible. Thus severed from their collective life, like limbs deprived of communication with the heart, many of them languished and grew dry or careless, almost insensibly dropping into infringements of their Rule. The vast organization of the religious Orders at this time must also be borne in mind, and the universal custom of pitchforking the younger sons of large and especially of poor families into religion as a matter of routine with or without a vocation: the case of François Rabelais, a hundred years later, is a celebrated one. There was, again, the inevitable sprinkling of undesirables, more especially among the Mendicant Orders, which afforded such scope for vagabondage. But here again there must be no generalization. There were monasteries of saints as of sinners; and it is indisputable that the wars were directly accountable for a great many of the lapses in France. Olivier Maillard, that fiery reformer, holds up other countries as an example in one of his sermons. "I have traveled in Germany and many other provinces, and there are a great number of reformed convents there, while you, here, are dying of hunger." It is equally true that the French monasteries still preserved most of the normal religious life of France, and held the seeds of reform. But neither France nor

England, each sick from a hundred years of war and each torn by civil strife, produced many recognized saints in the fifteenth century. All the great names are supplied elsewhere: St. Vincent Ferrer (though his apostolate embraced France) is a Spaniard, St. Francesco de Paula and St. Bernardino of Siena are Italians, St. John Capistran, the apostle of Hungary, also. Beyond St. Joan and Blessed Philippa de Chantemilan, whose goods and life were devoted to the suffering poor, in France, and Henry VI, yet uncanonized, in England, I can think of none. Doubtless there were many, for not all the saints in a given century come to be canonized.

The condition of the secular clergy was (again with due reservations) deplorable. The destruction of the countryside involved the cessation of the tithe, and numbers of the country clergy starved, or with starving regulars driven from their convents drifted into the towns to mingle with the miscellaneous hungry riff-raff of the streets, as the judicial papers of the period and Villon's poems plainly show. Those who held on struggled as best they might, saying Mass in barns and outhouses when the roof or walls of the parish church fell in. Some, less mindful of the dignity of their office, engaged in trade; sermons of the period accuse them of falling low enough even to lend money on interest and keep taverns. Their morals were often suitable.

The spectacle is depressing enough, but it is alleviated by an essential already referred to, which will be set forth immediately, and beforehand by the fact that there were still in France many bishops of the type of Thibault d'Aussigny of Orleans (so execrated in Villon's *Grand Testament*) and Thomas Basin, Bishop of Lisieux, men of piety and integrity, administrators and reformers, exemplary in every way, friars of the type of Maillard and Richard, priests of the type of Villon's uncle, Guillaume de Villon, theologians like Denys le Chartreux. So we come at length to the essential difference between this age and, for example, the eighteenth century, which it so resembles in the history of the Church: which is, that the whole nation held strongly to the Faith, in spite of the ruin of their churches and the lowered prestige of the clergy. Rude and bitter jests might be (and were) made on many of the pastors, but the flock remained firm. There is no relinquishing of the Faith in France, unless one counts the sect of demagogues which appeared for a brief moment in the Velay and the Forez, preaching a confused kind of communism and class-hatred in the manner of the Englishman John Ball and Wyclif's "poor priests" a few years earlier, and stirring up the peasants to attack châteaux and the wealthier churchmen. Their doctrine is well enough summed up in John Ball's rhyme:

When Adam delved and Eve span
Who was then the gentleman?

The nobles of the countryside, appalled by the suggestion that they should handle the spade and hoe and greatly resenting the burning of their châteaux, fell upon these with the aid of some of Villandrando's men and demolished them. One can hardly call these sectaries apostles of religious heresy: they were rather of the political school of thought which in later centuries will lead the "workers" and amass great private wealth.

The Franciscan Order at this time supplied France with several friars whose preaching was enormously popular, who nevertheless did not indulge in emotionalism and were remarkable for apostolic fervor. Such a one was Friar Richard, who preached for a week in Paris in 1429 to auditories of five or six thousand in the open air, since no church could contain them: it was this friar who, like another Savonarola, moved the

Parisians in 1429 and 1430 to make bonfires of their lewd books and games of chance. Another was the superb Olivier Maillard. Another was Friar Michel Menot. Another was the Carmelite friar Thomas Couette, a redoubtable enemy of all abuses, among them the monſtrous contemporary dress-fashions of women; a loud reformer whose unbridled tongue was so offensive a little later to certain persons at the Court of Rome that he ended in the fire. Yet another preaching friar, Jehan Creté, a young Franciscan, drew huge congregations in Paris in 1445, and seemed (says the Bourgeois of Paris) to know the Old and New Testaments by heart. And there were also the Burgundian preacher Jehan Brugmann and Friar Fradin, whom Louis XI exiled from Paris, not daring to shut his mouth in a more decisive manner for fear of the citizens, who rallied to the friar's side. The essence of the preaching of these popular friars (Maillard excepted, who was an intellectual and an administrator) is simple and sufficing: to win Paradise in the end it is necessary to live an honeſt life, to say one's prayers regularly, to hear Mass regularly and to the end, without talking to one's neighbor or approaching the prieſt (unless for communion,) to communicate at least at Eaſter, to confess once a month, and to observe the Sunday reſt from manual labor. These preachers undoubtedly influenced their auditories. All these mitigating elements should be borne in mind in considering the denunciations of such reformers as Maillard, who naturally painted the general situation in the blackeſt tints. A practical demonſtration of the ſtrong faith of the French laity at this period is afforded by the liſts of cathedral and other churches which were reſtored or rebuilt towards the end of the Hundred Years' War; among these the cathedrals of Rheims, Bourges, Evreux, Noyon, and the Sainte-Chapelle at Paris, with countless parish churches; this exclusive of new foundations. It was the laity, exhauſted by miseries and in many places bled white by the English, who found the money for this purpose. Again, the lay confraternities which had drooped were revived, and new ones founded, even during the English occupation. And all this time the eyes of every devout soul were fixed on Bâle in Switzerland, where the Council of Bâle was in session for eighteen years. Something of the general anxiety and hope surrounding the deliberations is conveyed in an entry in the journal of the Bourgeois of Paris, who writes disappointedly in 1435: "Item, at this time there was no more news in Paris from the Council of Bâle, in sermons or otherwise, than if they were all sitting at Jerusalem." The Council, divided by disputes and storms, did not perform what all Christendom was expecting of it, although it abolished more than one crying abuse, notably the claims of the rapacious treasury officials of the Court of Rome to *annates* (the first year's revenue of new benefices), to the reservation of certain vacant benefices to the Holy See, and to the earmarking of the revenues of certain occupied benefices against the time when they should be vacant. An historian of the Church has observed that these fiscal abuses were to a great extent responsible for the schism which broke up European unity and culture a century later. Such results were good and necessary, but yet not enough. It was to require a rude shock from a bestial personage [10] out of Germany to bring about what every Christian awaited, and which came at last with the upward surge of the Counter-Reformation, the advent of the storm-troops of Loyola.

Two adjuncts of the Church, one of them at least in much the same condition, may be briefly surveyed before this chapter closes: the hospitals and the Universities.

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[10] "A bestial maniac," is the brisker phrase of the London Times, reviewing M. Jacques Maritain's recent study of Luther.

The immediately preceding centuries, having mastered the plague of leprosy which the Crusaders had brought home, had built hospitals broadcast. Almost every fair-sized village in France and Flanders had one; the great towns many—Arras for example, had fifteen. These were organized and staffed by the religious Orders, men and women, and bequests in their favor were as common as bequests to chantries. The Hundred Years' War dealt with the hospitals as with the other religious foundations, visiting them with desolation and ruin; the sick often lay neglected, deprived of treatment, even of food; in some cases the nursing staff, infected by the evils of the time, had lapsed lamentably from their duty. Conditions at such an important hospital as the Hostel-Dieu at Paris were terrible during such a severe winter as that of 1438, when an epidemic was added to extreme cold. The sick, piled into beds, as many in each bed as it would hold, lay and starved or froze to death, a great part of the bed-furniture having been pillaged by town thieves.

The state of the Universities of France at this time (excluding the greatest of them, that of Paris) is more hopeful. This was a period which, although the pure leaping flame of thirteenth century Scholasticism had dwindled to a flickering smokiness, respected and cultivated works of the intellect. A number of provincial universities sprang up between 1432 and 1460. The University of Poitiers was founded in 1432, and that of Caen began in the same year; in 1432 Pope Eugenius IV granted to the University of Angers the three Faculties of Theology, Arts, and Medicine. Bordeaux had a university in 1441; in 1452 Louis XI (then Dauphin) founded the University of Valence in Dauphiny, and in 1460 François II, Duke of Brittany, founded one at Nantes.

The University of Paris, which was still the master-house of learning in Christendom, though the provincial and foreign universities—Oxford, Vienna, Prague—had shaken its international supremacy, and though the Doctors of the Sorbonne now preserved only the poor remains of what had made the University such a blaze of splendor in the days of St. Thomas Aquinas and Abelard, Peter Lombard and Rudolf of Cologne, was the turbulent international state within the State familiar to all students of Villon, who took his master's degree in Arts in 1452. The austere rule of the original pious foundations, that huge agglomeration of colleges of every European nation forming the University, had slackened with the times, and the reforms instituted by the Papal Legate in 1452 were only too urgently needed. Elsewhere there is quoted a speech to a delegation of doctors of the Sorbonne by Louis XI, delivered with the rough side of his tongue. "You are a bad lot," rasps the King. "You lead bad lives, with the great fat trollops you keep!" This sweeping charge did not universally apply, for University was huge and composed of many types; but it is to be noted that the outspoken friar Maillard also lashes the University, masters and students alike. "You, gentlemen, students of the Faculty of Laws, God knows what you study, and what laws!" And again: "You, most respectable masters, and you, students —you employ your incomes, and alms, and possessions in the upkeep of . . . women!" Rubbing shoulders with these were the hordes of poor students who begged alms in the streets or who—like Villon and his dearest friends—attached themselves to the criminal riffraff of Paris and lived from hand to mouth.

There is little to be said about the intellectual prestige of the Paris doctors at this moment. Their fodder was the dry chaff of a decayed scholastic philosophy, their doyen was Thomas de Courcelles, one of the judges of St. Joan: a dull, conceited, malignant pedant, *asinus egregius, asinorum domi-*

nus. It was Thomas de Courcelles who proposed at Rouen that the Maid should be tortured. His suggestion was not adopted. When her *procès de réhabilitation* was begun in July 1456, at Charles VII's order, he was afflicted with poorness of memory and could not recollect such matters. With such men at its head it is no wonder that the comic episode of Master Fernando de Cordova made the University of Paris a laughing-stock in the eyes of all Europe. Master Fernando de Cordova, a young Spaniard, appeared suddenly at the Sorbonne one day and, as the European custom then was (and as it continued for centuries, enabling, among others, Goldsmith, to travel Europe by picking up the small *douceur* to which disputants whose challenges were not met had the right) [11] announced his readiness to dispute with the Doctors. The Bourgeois of Paris, round-eyed with awe, reels off the list of the young man's self-proclaimed achievements. He had the Seven Liberal Arts at his fingertips; he could play all musical instruments, and sing better than any; he could paint and illuminate manuscripts better than any (and Paris was the European center of beauti- Greek, Hebrew, Chaldee, Arabic, and "all other languages"; he could handle a two-handed sword marvelously, and when faced with an antagonist he could leap 22 or 23 paces at once upon him; he was a Master of Arts, a Doctor of Civil Law, of Canon Law, of Medicine, of Theology; he was a fully qualified ful manuscript work); he could speak Latin (*"trop subtil"*), chevalier. "Truly," exclaims the Bourgeois, who was present at his preliminary display at the College of Navarre, when Master Fernando disputed with fifty of the best clerks of University, before an audience of 3,000, "truly a man could live a hundred years without eating, drinking, or sleeping, and he would not acquire such knowledge as this man has by heart!" Master Fernando de Cordova, this phenomenon, having made one dazzling appearance, seems to have slipped away quietly before University could recover its breath and ask him something difficult. He went off to Ghent to the Duke of Burgundy, intending to go from there to England, changed his mind and went to Germany (where they undoubtedly worshiped him), and is supposed to have died in Rome in 1486, at the age of 65. The University of Paris so far forgot its dignity as to send after him a severe demand that he should return and fulfill some of his boastings. It is not easy to perceive which of the two was the bigger fool. But still it was in a room in the Sorbonne on a memorable day in 1470 that Ulrich Gering, Martin Kranz, and Michel Freiburger, at the direction of two Sorbonne professors, Jehan Heynlin and Guillaume Fichet, pulled the first proofs of the first printed book in France, one year before Caxton. This was the *Epistolæ* of Gasparino Barzizi; a book of clear well-spaced pages set in a wide flowery border, with the decorated capital at the chapter head, following the immemorial manuscript tradition. In the next year they printed a Sallust, prefaced by a panegyric of Louis XI, who—it would have been surprising to find such a man doing anything else—eagerly welcomed and encouraged the new art, as did the aged Philip of Burgundy. In 1477 the first book printed in France in the French language was presented to Louis: a volume of the Chronicles of France, written by the monks of the Abbey of St. Denis, an appropriate gift for a king who not only studied history but applied his reading. It came from the press of Pasquier Bonhomme, at the sign of the Image of St. Christopher in the Rue St. Jacques, the *docte Rue St. Jacques,* which is so redolent of literature with its memories of Jehan de Meung, of the *Summa* (a great part of which the Angelic Doctor composed in the great Dominican friary in this street), of Villon, of the Cramoisy, of the booksellers of three centuries.

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[11] "In all the foreign Universities and Convents there are, upon certain days, philosophical theses maintained against every adventitious disputant; for which, if the champion opposes with any dexterity, he can claim a gratuity in money, a dinner, and a bed for one night. In this manner, therefore, I fought my way towards England."—Goldsmith, *The Vicar of Wakefield,* Chap. XX.

"He (Goldsmith) afterwards studied physick at Edinburgh, and upon the Continent; and I have been informed, was enabled to pursue his travels on foot, partly by demanding at Universities to enter the lists as a disputant, by which, according to the custom of many of them, he was entitled to the premium of a crown, when luckily for him his challenge was not accepted; so that, as I once observed to Dr. Johnson, he disputed his passage through Europe."—Boswell, *Life of Johnson.*

The medieval Sorbonne has long since vanished, with its successor, which Richelieu built,[12] but there still stands one building in the Rue St. Jacques in which men spoke in Louis' day of the new art of printed books; the church of St. Séverin, that Gothic treasure.

§ 4

Life in Paris, meanwhile, may be displayed in a selection of vignettes by contemporary hands.

On a morning in August 1433, in the thirteenth year of the English occupation, a citizen of Paris, a goldsmith named Gossuyn de Luet, who was taking the air after an illness, met a friend, one Michel Garcye, sauce-maker, at the end of Notre Dame bridge, and went with him ("the said Gossuyn saying he had a thirst") to a tavern in the Rue des Arcis, at the sign of the Image of Our Lady. Here they encountered two other citizens, tradesmen like themselves, Jehan Trotet, baker, and Jehan d'Arras, cordwainer. The four sat down together and called for breakfast and drink, and their conversation fell very soon on the obvious topic—the bad times, the wars, the state of the kingdom, the sufferings of the poor in Paris and elsewhere. The baker Trotet asked Gossuyn de Luet how trade went; to which the goldsmith answered gloomily that his was the worst trade of all, since while bakers and cordwainers and such could always sell their goods for more or less, according to the market, the goldsmiths of Paris found no one to employ them; pursuing which theme Gossuyn de Luet was moved to add that there would never be good times in Paris again until they had a peace-loving King, a full and thriving University, and a Parliament which was obeyed. To which Trotet the baker, having probably emptied a tankard, answered significantly that things could not long remain in their present parlous state, and that if there were to be found in Paris five hundred men of determination they would soon find a thousand more to assist them. After this the conversation turned to other topics, and after finishing their breakfast the four citizens took leave of each other and separated.

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[12] The Sorbonne church remains, with Richelieu's tomb.

Their talk had been overheard, possibly by one of the Duke of Bedford's spies, possibly by a chance English lounger. Some little time afterwards the cordwainer Jehan d'Arras, meeting Gossuyn de Luet outside his house, said to him in a fairly loud voice: *"Le bon corps est venu"*—the good company has arrived. Within a brief space arrests followed wholesale. Trotet, who seems to have been actively involved in this plot against the English, was executed with five or six adherents; Jehan d'Arras fled from Paris; Gossuyn de Luet was put to the question, energetically denied any complicity, and after being *très durement traveillié de son corps* by the officials of the Châtelet and imprisoned for some months was granted a letter of remission by Bedford in February 1435.[13] This was one of eight conspiracies against the English in Paris between 1422 and 1434, and the part taken in such affairs by respectable tradesmen may be noted.

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[13] *Paris pendant la Domination anglaise:* Documents extraits des Registres de la Chancellerie de France, 1420-1436. (Longnon). JJ. 175, No. 334.

The same documents afford other intimate glimpses of the Parisians. Thus in April 1425 the parishioners of St. Merri successfully petition Henry VI to close a brothel close by in the Rue Taillepain and banish the ladies its inhabitants, whose conduct and example is *mauvais, vil, et abhominable,* to the Rue du Renard; many Parisians who have left the capital for one reason or another to live in parts of France under the allegiance of the Dauphin (Charles VII) are granted permission to return to their families; in April 1430 an anti-English plot is discovered in which one item is the projected entry into Paris by the St. Denis gate of eighty to a hundred armed Scotsmen "disguised as English," in small inconspicuous groups and *tout courtoisement;* in March 1432 one Guiot l'Eguiller, drinking in the Armed Man tavern by St. Merri with four servants of the Duke and Duchess of Bedford, becomes involved in a brawl and kills Friar Robert l'Oubloier of the Blancs-Manteaux, a lapsed religious who is drinking there in lay habit with two companions; the grocer Guillaume Doucet, having been discovered selling oil at six deniers a pint above the price fixed by the Provost, oils the palm of three sergeants of the Châtelet who arrest him with two gold crowns, and one sergeant goes to prison; a certain number of representatives of great English families, Blounts, Willoughbys, Beauchamps, Hungerfords, Montagus, Chetwodes, are awarded valuable land and property in Paris confiscated from the Dauphin's adherents; numerous religious lay confraternities are revived or newly established. It would also appear that a sense of humor was dangerous during the English occupation, for a mason named Pierre Thouroud, having playfully demanded of one Master Oudard le Fer if the

Duke of Burgundy's visit to Paris in July 1429 was for the purpose of preventing the Dauphin's coronation, is forthwith arrested and cast into the Châtelet, and thence into the pillory. At least half a dozen respectable young Parisians, goaded by misery, take to the roads as highwaymen, and at least one ex-officer of the French Royal Household is driven to sell some of the tapestries committed to his charge in order to buy food for his family. The conduct of the English garrison, judged from these papers, seems not overwhelmingly bad. Three of them quarrel with the hostess of a tavern over their reckoning, and one of them stabs the sergeant of the Châtelet called in to restore order. Two others try to break into the house of a *femme amoureuse* by night, and the lady, rising fretful from bed, flings stones and scores one fatal hit. Two other English hearts-of-oak carry out a series of frauds on drapers and mercers by means of leaden money. Actually the English troops of this period were not without strict discipline, a consequent in part of their being relatively well paid: among other factors were the distance from home and its inaccessibility, which discouraged insubordination and desertion, relative directness and simplicity of command, as opposed to the feudal and hierarchic command of the French forces, and the very solid *cadre* of the English army, with its rank and file of English, Irish, and Welsh archers and infantry, as opposed to the French jumble of dukes', counts', and knights' private companies. The English, therefore, were disciplined, and although the fighting during the Hundred Years' War was not done in kid gloves, it is highly probable that many of the Flayers' misdeeds in France were put down to the English account. One would not desire to whitewash. Some of the English exploits under orders are almost comparable with things done by Cromwell's Puritans in Ireland, or by the Prussians in Belgium in

1914. Here is a specimen scene, recorded by the Bourgeois of Paris, whose invaluable Journal may be dipped into again in due course. The year is 1436, immediately before the English withdrew from Paris. On the Tuesday in Easter Week some six to eight hundred English troops were sent to fire the villages between Paris and Pontoise. At St. Denis they stopped to pillage the great abbey, looting reliquaries and whatever else of value they could lay hands on. In the Abbey church a priest was saying a Mass of the day at the high altar, and the impatient soldiers found the office much too long. As soon as the celebrant had said the *Domine, non sum dignus,* and had received the Blessed Sacrament in both kinds, a tall rascal (*ung grant ribaut*) leaped up the altar steps, snatched the empty chalice with the corporals, and took to his heels. Thus and in many other ways, says the Bourgeois, did the town of St. Denis suffer the evils which "our bishops and governors" had ordered the English troops to perform. He is referring to those prelate-politicians whose hatred for the Dauphin and his loyalists dominated every other sentiment in their bosoms: Pierre Cauchon, Bishop of Beauvais, St. Joan's implacable judge, is the type.

Another vignette, from the Journal of Clément de Fauquembergue, Canon of Notre Dame. In 1435 the Chapter of Notre Dame Cathedral had begun to sell their Treasury in order to live. The Treasury of Notre Dame was notable: gifts had been poured into it for centuries, jeweled chalices, monstrances, pyxes, reliquaries of massy gold and silver (some of these were exquisitely delicate examples of the French goldsmiths' art, like that reliquary holding a thorn from the Crown of Thorns —Louis XI presented it in later years to the still famous shrine of Our Lady of Hal, near Brussels—of which the goldwork resembled the finest lace), censers, almsdishes, lamps, candlesticks, grilles, vestments of cloth-of-gold, every kind of beautiful accessory to the service of the altar. By 1437 a great deal of this had been got rid of, chiefly to the wealthy English and Burgundians, who were at that time to the French what the Americans now are to Europe. On September 24, 1437, comes a peremptory note from Charles VII to the Chapter requesting a loan of 200 silver marks towards the expense of taking Montereau from the English. The Chapter have no choice; two of their number, de Fauquembergue himself and Hue de Dicy, are deputed to examine the Treasury and decide what can be done, and on their report the Chapter sacrifice two great silver dishes and four silver candlesticks, together worth 37 marks, which are weighed by the silversmith Jehan Fournier and despatched to the moneychanger Regnaud de Thuméry; and Charles gets his money, or some of it. One imagines the glum conclave in the Chapter House of Notre Dame; the Canons in their furred aumusses against the dark oak stalls; de Fauquembergue and Hue de Dicy pursing their lips over the remains of the Treasury, shaking heads, shrugging, returning to the Chapter, hands tucked in sleeves. One sees the silversmith Fournier with his jingling scales, and the moneychanger Thuméry running a professional depreciatory eye over the parcel as the Chapter's servants deliver it, and the King away under the walls of Montereau, sweating in his quarters after a brisk sortie, long-nosed, mudsplashed, irritable, a red mark on his forehead from the uneasy steel helmet. . . .

Canon Clément de Fauquembergue is a good specimen of the worthy and dignified Parisian of this time, numerous, yet so apt to be eclipsed in a picture of fifteenth century Paris by the more romantic and dashing blackguardism of the Villons and the Baudes and some of the flesh-loving Sorbonnical doctors. He holds, besides his canonry in the Metropolitan, the office of *greffier,* or clerk, to the Parlement; he is learned in the law, conscientious, devout, not wealthy. His house, of which an inventory exists, is furnished plainly with wooden furniture, and in place of tapestries his frugal walls are hung with painted cloth. He keeps a mule, and among the articles in his modest wardrobe is a steel jacket, of the kind worn by men-at-arms, which he wears under his canonical gown when riding on Chapter business into the countryside, along the dangerous roads infested by bandits and Flayers. His Journal is sober and dignified, like himself, and when he begins an entry on some feast, or holiday of Parliament, he adds a brief devout flourish, as: *"Feast of St. Lawrence, who suffered martyrdom on a grille for the love of God."* I picture him as resembling, in his solid gravity, the merchant Jan Arnolfini of Lucca in that glorious little jewel by Van Eyck.

The Pepys of the period, with differences, (for he was not perpetually engaged with eyes and ankles) is the anonymous Bourgeois of Paris, whom some scholars tentatively identify with Jehan Chuffart, like Fauquembergue a Canon of Notre Dame, whose Journal is a priceless source of information on Parisian daily life between 1405 and 1449. One could wish the Bourgeois had continued it under the new dispensation, from 1461; it is nevertheless a rich mine, so far as it goes, for our purpose. The Bourgeois resembles Pepys exceedingly in his vivid interest in and curiosity about life; if there are Siamese twins born at Aubervilliers in 1429 for example, he is compelled to go there to see and hold them (*"car pour vray je les vy et les tins entre mes mains"*); a calf born in the Rue de la Chanvrerie in Paris with two heads, eight feet, and two tails appeals to him as being as worthy of record as Henry VI's coronation procession; the casting of the great bell Jacqueline of Notre Dame, a famous preacher, a good hanging, an epidemic, an irruption of bandits, the price of food, a new game—

he notes them all. From his attentiveness to the weather, the march of the seasons, and the state of the crops, especially the vineyards, it is conjectured that (like Villon's uncle Guillaume de Villon, chaplain of St. Benoît-le-Bientourné) he owned a small vine-preserve himself. Thus in 1428 he records: "Item, in this year after Easter, which fell on the fourth of April, there was such a plague of cockchafers as had never been seen before, and they so devoured the vines and the almond, walnut, and other trees that throughout the country districts they attacked there were no leaves on the trees—especially walnuts—fifteen days before St. John Baptist. (June 24)." And in 1430: "Item, this year there was a profusion of white roses on Easter Sunday, which fell on April 8; so advanced was the year." Again, in 1440: "This year was very fruitful in every kind of crops, which were very good and cheap; good wheat was 16 sols Parisis (the year before it was 5 francs), and . . . there were very good peas for 6 *blancs,* and such cheapness of fruit as one could most desire: plump peaches at 2 deniers Parisis the hundred, pears of Angoisse or Callieu-Pepin, very plump, 4 deniers the quarter, damask plums 7 deniers the hundred." And so at frequent and regular intervals.

The Bourgeois has the gift of description. Consider this picture of Paris in the rain. It is Sunday, April 22, 1436, and a solemn procession of thanksgiving, conveying the reliquaries of St. Geneviève, Patroness of Paris, and St. Marcel, has been ordered, to celebrate the recent withdrawal of the English from Paris after an occupation of sixteen years:

> This day it rained so hard that the downpour never ceased as long as the procession lasted, which was four hours, going out and returning; and my lords of St. Geneviève were greatly harassed, for they went barefoot: those who bore the precious body of Madame St. Geneviève and St. Marcel especially had much trouble, for they could

> hardly stand on the cobbles, and truly they were so soaked that they might have been dipped in the Seine. They sweated so that it poured down all their faces, so hard was their task, but very certainly not one of them was for a moment perturbed, or ill, or discouraged, which seems to me a miracle on the part of Madame St. Geneviève, who can well perform them by her merits with Our Lord, and greater ones than this, as appears in her holy story; for how many times has she not saved the good town of Paris, sometimes from famine, other times from flood and many other perils!

The imposition of heavy taxes, *imposicions, quatrièmes, males toutes,* by the English early in 1421, together with speculation (though steps were taken to repress this) made life terrible for the poor:

> Prices (writes the Bourgeois) rose so much that at Easter a good ox cost 200 francs or more, a good calf 12 francs, a flitch of bacon 8 or 10 francs, a small pig 16 or 20, a small white cheese 6 sols Parisis . . .[14] A hundred eggs cost 16 sols Parisis. And all day and night, throughout Paris, could be heard such long plaints, lamentations, and piteous cries on account of the high price of food, that I think Jeremy the Prophet never uttered more tragic when the city of Jerusalem was destroyed and the children of Israel taken into Babylon, into captivity; for night and day cries arose from men, women, and children: "Alas! I die of cold"—or hunger. In good truth it was the longest winter any man had seen for forty years; in Easter week it snowed, froze, and was more terribly cold than one can imagine.
>
> Some good citizens of Paris, on account of the great misery which they saw the poor to be suffering, bought three or four houses which they turned into hostels for poor children dying of hunger throughout Paris; there they were given soup, and a good fire, and a good bed; in less than three months there were forty beds or more in each hostel, all well furnished, that these good people of Paris had supplied.

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[14] A nominal and rough modern equivalent of these figures may be obtained by multiplying the gold *franc* by between 35 and 37. The *blanc* was a small silver coin worth at this time 10 copper *deniers,* or "pennies." The *sol Parisis* was worth 15 deniers, the *sol Tournois* 12 deniers. The value of these coins fluctuated considerably from reign to reign: at the end of Louis XI's reign, for example, the *blanc* is worth 12 deniers, by the eighteenth century six *blancs* will be worth two sous and a half. The purchasing power of fifteenth-century money is the subject for a long essay rather than a footnote.

The Parisian poor that year and a few years following lived on cabbage-stumps, uncooked, without bread, and saltless herbs grubbed from fields or waste grounds. In April of that year a pound of salt butter cost 10 sols Parisis, a pint of oil, formerly costing 5 sols, went up to 12. And the Bourgeois notes grimly that when the knacker went about killing stray curs a number of the starving poor would follow him, hoping for the flesh and entrails. It was in this year 1421 that the wolves, driven by hunger from the woods, slunk across the frozen Seine and other rivers and entered the towns, haunting especially cemeteries outside the walls, so that when a fresh burial took place they could scratch up the body at night and devour it. Worse was to happen seventeen years later, when to the appalling cold were added a small-pox epidemic and incursions by bands of brigands from the suburbs, and the poor dropped to die in the streets.

> Item (writes the Bourgeois) on the feast of the Epiphany bandits from Chevreuse, about twenty or thirty in number, came to the Porte St. Jacques and entered Paris, and killed a sergeant seated at a door, and went away coolly, taking with them three of the guard at the gate and many other poor persons, not counting their booty, which was not small (the time was only 12 o'clock or thereabouts) and saying: "Hey! Where is your King? Is he hiding?" On account of the ravages of these bands bread and wine became so dear that few had sufficient to eat, and the poor drank no wine nor ate any meat, but only turnips and cabbage-stumps roasted, without bread; and day and night the cry went up from men and women and children: "I am dying! Alas, alas, dear God! I am dying of hunger and cold."

He adds:

> Item, neither the King nor any of his lords came to Paris, or within reach, so that they might have been in Jerusalem; and because of this nothing could be brought into Paris which was not ransomed or stolen by the brigands infesting the environs. Round about the winter feast of St. Martin (November 11) good wheat was seven francs and a

> half, or more, barley 6 francs the *sextier,* peas and beans 6 francs, a little cask of red wine 4 or 5 . . .
>
> Item, the mortality was so great, especially in Paris, that there died in the Hostel-Dieu this year 5000 persons, and in the town more than 40,000, men, women, and children; for when death made an entry into a house it carried off the greater number of persons in it, especially the youngest and strongest.

This epidemic of 1438, as I have said, is presumed to have been small-pox, and its ravages among the ill-nourished and poor and the wealthy alike were fearful. In the Hostel-Dieu as many patients died of starvation as of disease. All bell-ringing was prohibited while the plague lasted. The Bourgeois proceeds:

> Item, of this disease died the Bishop of Paris, Sire Jacques (du Châtelier), a very pompous and covetous man, more worldly than his state required.
>
> Item, at this time came the wolves into Paris again, across the river, and took dogs, and devoured a child by night in the Place aux Chats, behind the Innocents.

The wolves, having acquired a taste for the flesh of the citizens of Paris, came again in the last week of September 1439 and killed and devoured fourteen persons between Montmartre and the Porte St. Antoine. "If they came upon a flock of sheep," says the Bourgeois, "they would attack the shepherd and ignore the flock." On December 26th of the same year they came again suddenly, killed four housewives, and attacked seventeen other persons around the walls, of whom eleven died of bites. In this year 1439 new taxes were added—four sols Parisis on horned cattle at market, eight *blancs* on pigs, four on sheep and lambs; and with all this a heavy general tax or *taille,* strictly collected.

Lest it should seem that there was nothing but unrelieved suffering in Paris at this time, a gayer entry may be quoted. The year is 1425:

> Item, on the feast of St. Leu and St. Gilles, which was a Saturday, the first of September, some persons of that parish invented a new game, and played it; and this was the manner of it: they took a very long pole, about six toises (roughly 37 feet), and stuck it into the ground, and right at the top they fixed a basket containing a fat goose and sixpence, and then greased the pole thoroughly. Then it was announced that whosoever could capture the said goose by climbing the pole without aid could have the pole, the basket, the goose, and the sixpence; but no one, however skillful a climber, could come at it. But in the evening a young lad who had climbed highest was given the goose, but not the sixpence, nor the pole. This took place in the Rue aux Oues, opposite the Rue Quincampoix.

We may observe in parenthesis the medieval origin of two familiar modern pastimes: infant welfare and the greasy pole. Let us turn now to contemplate a great crowd assembling on Montmartre, not as yet the crapulous playground of Puritans on holiday and those revelers whom the French genially call *rastas,* or *métèques.* The year is 1429, the friar concerned is Richard, the young Franciscan who had been stirring Paris, preaching to audiences of six thousand at St. Geneviève. His sermons began at five in the morning and ended at ten.

> Item, at this time Friar Richard went away, and on the Sunday when he was due to leave it was noised abroad throughout Paris that he would preach on the spot, or near by, where Monseigneur St. Denis and many other martyrs had been beheaded. So there went out more than six thousand people from Paris during the greater part of Saturday evening, in great crowds, to secure the best places for the Sunday morning; and they slept that night in the fields or in old hovels, as best they could: but the friar was unable to preach.

Here is another picture, showing the Bourgeois to possess a sense of the theater. In January 1430 there were numerous executions of bandits, of whom ten were hanged in one morning by the Halles:

> The eleventh was an exceedingly handsome young lad of about twenty-four. He was stripped and about to have his eyes bandaged when a young girl, born at the Halles, came forward and boldly demanded his life; she did so well by her intervention that he was taken back to the Châtelet, and afterwards they were married.

Thus occasionally did the romantic medieval custom of allowing a criminal now and again to profit by good looks and feminine impulsiveness defeat the ends of Justice.

With one or two more brief entries we may take leave of the Bourgeois. The first, a swift and poignant incident enough, is from his account of the coronation procession through Paris of the nine-year-old Henry VI of England in December 1431. Queen Ysabeau or Isabel of Bavaria, detested very heartily by the Parisians as a foreigner, a traitress, and a harlot, is at this time sixty years old:

> When they passed before the Hôtel de St. Paul the Queen of France, Isabel, wife of the late King Charles, sixth of that name, was at a window with her ladies; when she saw the young king Henry, son of her daughter, opposite her, he removed his bonnet and saluted her, and at once she made him a low obeisance very humbly, and turned away, weeping.

The confusion at the Palace after the coronation is admirably described. The Paris mob had crowded into the banqueting hall early, gaping at the show and stealing whatever food and drink they could lay hands on. So great was the crush—it must have been like a political hostess's party in Mayfair on the eve of the Parliamentary Session—that the representatives of Parliament, the University, and the Town of Paris could not force their way in. Eventually, after much heaving and pushing and trampling and falling, of which full advantage was taken by pickpockets, the best people got in and the populace was expelled.

It is necessary to explain that the Bourgeois of Paris is stoutly

Burgundian in his sympathies, although in one place he very acidly records some ſtage-managed enthusiasm welcoming the Regent Bedford. His comments on St. Joan echo the ordinary English view. There is, he writes in 1429, some talk of a Maid in the Loire country who has relieved Orleans and her friends the *Arminalx*—the Armagnacs, by which name, and no other, he contemptuously alludes to the adherents of Charles VII. There are (he adds) ſtories about her once keeping sheep, and of wild birds coming to her call and eating out of her lap. And he dismisses the peerless Maid in one crushing phrase: "*In veritate appocrisium eſt.*" (In truth, this is hypocrisy.) Nevertheless he reports St. Joan's progress very fully, expressing much indignation at her assault on Paris. He admires Bedford, the Regent, as well he might, for Bedford was a great and subtle ſtatesman and, had the English continued their grip on Paris, would undoubtedly have brought order out of chaos: he ſtill more admires the Duchess of Bedford, Anne of Burgundy, of whose death in 1432 he writes:

> Item, at this time there still prevailed an epidemic in Paris, which attacked the Duchess of Bedford, wife of the Regent of France and siſter of the Duke of Burgundy, Anne by name, the most gracious of all the ladies who were then in France, for she was good, and beautiful, and in the flower of her age: she was only twenty-eight when she died, and she was certainly loved by the people of Paris.

This is no routine compliment. The Duchess was in the habit of conſtantly visiting, comforting, and assiſting the sick poor, and would brave the terrors of the Hostel-Dieu for that purpose. She died on the thirteenth of November: her body was buried in the Celeſtines' church by the Baſtille, her heart in the Auguſtinian church, on the right bank. On the eighth of January Bedford was present at a solemn requiem Mass for her soul at the Celeſtines, and after Mass diſtributed two pence each to the fourteen thousand poor who mourned her with him. Three years later, when Bedford had married Jacqueline of Luxembourg, daughter of that nobleman whom Louis XI executed later for high treason, to the Duchess Jacqueline came a deputation of the women of Paris, noble and bourgeois, praying her to work upon her husband for peace. She answered, ("very gently and sweetly," says the Bourgeois): "My dear friends, it is one of the things I desire most in this world, for which I beg my lord day and night." Within a year the English were out of Paris for ever, the end of the English occupation in France was in sight, and Bedford's great heart broken at the failure of his life-work.

There is another Parisian whose journal, in places as vivid as the Bourgeois' own, is even more valuable for the purpose of this sketch, since it stretches over the whole of Louis' reign: this is the journal, called the *Chronique scandaleuse* (possibly, as has been said, because it is not scandalous) of Jehan de Roye, notary at the Châtelet Prison. One of Jehan de Roye's entries is celebrated as a record of what is believed to be the first operation for stone in France; a daring enough operation, in which Louis XI was keenly interested. The year is 1475. I transcribe the entry:

> In the month of January it happened that a free archer of Meudon, near Paris, was held a prisoner in the Châtelet for several burglaries in divers places, and even in the church of Meudon itself; for which crimes and sacrilege he was condemned to be hanged on the gibbet of Paris at Montfaucon. He appealed against this sentence to the Court of Parliament, where he was taken to prosecute his appeal, and by the Court the said free archer was declared to have appealed wrongly, and to have been rightly sentenced by the Provost of Paris, to whom he was sent back for the execution of the sentence.
>
> The same day it was brought to the King's notice by certain physicians and surgeons of Paris that many and divers persons were plagued

and molested by the stone, and by colic and a painful malady of the side, from which the said archer had also suffered; that Monseigneur du Bouchage was then very ill of these same maladies; and that it would be of very great value to inspect the seat of these maladies in the human body; the which knowledge could not be better gained than by opening the body of a living man, which could be very well carried out on the person of this free archer, who was in any case about to suffer death.

The said opening and incision was therefore made in the body of the said free archer, and the situation of the said maladies observed, and afterwards he was sewn up and his entrails replaced, and, by the King's order, was very well nursed; so that within the fortnight following he was completely cured, and received free remission of his sentence, and with it a gift of money.

Hogarth might have illustrated this operation, and indeed there is one horrific plate of his which faithfully depicts one just as evocative of shudders in the weak-nerved. So much for the archer, a tough subject who had much to be grateful for, in spite of a bad half-hour. It may be remembered swiftly in passing that his corps, established by Charles VII in his military reform and subsidized by the *communes,* inspired the famous comic Monologue of the Free Archer of Bagnolet (c. 1468) which was for some time attributed to Villon; a rattling piece of vivid and joyous satire in which the braggadocio Free Archer, swaggering and lying, twirling his mustachios, with one predatory eye on an old woman's henroost, is suddenly terrified by a scarecrow stuffed with straw, which he takes alternately for a French and a Breton man-at-arms.

(*A part*)
Ha! le Sacrement de l'autel!
Je suis affoibly! Qu'esse cy?
(*A l'espoventail*).
Ha! Monseigneur, pour Dieu, mercy!
Hault le traict, qu'aye la vie franche!
Je voy bien, à vostre croix blanche,
Que nous sommes tout d'ung party! . . .

> [(*Aside*) Ha! God's Body, I'm all of a tremble! What's this? (*To the scarecrow*) Ha! My lord, for God's sake, mercy! Lift your arm a trifle, sir, so that I shan't be hit! I see from your white cross, sir, that we are both on the same side! . . .]

Admirable fooling, at which the Parisians laughed consumedly. The Free Archers distinguished themselves most ingloriously during Louis XI's campaign against Brittany in 1464, and this theater-piece rubs their reputation well in.[15]

From surgery we may turn to an etching by Jehan de Roye of a fifteenth-century Madame Bovary:

> In this year 1482 there died in many places of an epidemic of fever and head-pains (*raige de teste*) many great and notable personages, men and women; among others the Archbishops of Narbonne and Bourges, the Bishop of Lisieux, Master Jehan le Boulengier, etc. . . . Many counsellors and advocates of the Court of Parliament died also, among them Master Nicole Bataille, who was said to be the greatest jurisconsult in the kingdom of France, a worthy personage and very charming (*fort plaisant*), who was greatly pitied, and not without reason. They say he died of chagrin at the behavior of his wife, a daughter of Master Nicole Erlant, during his lifetime Treasurer of Dauphiny; although she had had all the pleasure of her husband a woman can have, and he had had twelve children by her in marriage, and was only forty-four years old. His said wife misconducted herself in lechery of her vile body (*lescherie de sa pute charongne*) with several loose fellows during her marriage, and among others kept a youth named Regnault la Pie, son of a fishwife and vegetable-woman of the Halles in Paris, who had formerly had employment in close contact with the King as a footman, and had been turned away for faults and misconduct laid to his charge by Olivier le Diable, *dit* le Daim, his colleague as barber-valet to the King's chamber. This youth this woman took into her disorderly loves, and in order to keep him sold or pawned her jewelry and her husband's plate, and also took some of her husband's money feloniously, to cherish the said rascal. Of all these things her husband was informed, and was seized with such anger thereat that on this account he departed this life, which

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[15] Louis XI disbanded them about 1480 and replaced them by Swiss infantry mercenaries.

was a sore pity. May his soul have good rest in the kingdom of Heaven.

And here—perhaps, after all, the epithet *scandaleuse* may be mildly and relatively allowed: the Châtelet Notary is certainly not above recording sparingly, here and there, an item which is making the town's tongue wag[16]—here is a night-piece in which that *arriviste* politician Cardinal Balue, whose private life was a crying scandal to the devout, is the central figure. It must first be noted that Balue, then Bishop of Evreux, was a rival of the cynical debauchee Charles de Melun (who ended on the scaffold as a traitor in 1468) for the good graces of a celebrated Parisian beauty named Jehanne du Bois. After the incident which I am about to quote from the *Chronique scandaleuse* Charles de Melun denied all complicity in it, and declared that one day, in order to prove to Balue that the lady was indifferent to him (Balue), he had displayed a ring with a heart-shaped ruby and a packet of her letters; on seeing which Balue went "as white as a flag," and was the mortal enemy of Charles de Melun ever after. The night-scene is as follows:

> This night (September 24, 1465) at about two in the morning, Monseigneur the Bishop of Evreux, Balue, was shadowed and surprised by some of his enemies in the Rue de la Barre du Bec, near the back door of the late Master Bureau Boucher, when they rushed upon him and at once extinguished two torches carried before him. The said Balue was mounted on a good mule, which saved his life by flight, for his attendants abandoned him for fear of a thrashing; and the said mule carried Master Balue to the cloister of Notre Dame to his house, whence he had set out.

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[16] He is the sole authority for a statement that immediately after Louis XI's death the body was immediately abandoned by his servants—*incontinent fut le corps habandonné de ceulx qui l'avoient servy en la vie.* But here he is not an eyewitness, and for some time before his death the Parisians knew nothing at all of Louis' condition or movements. Hence (especially as Commynes, who was present at the death-bed, says nothing of it) this may be taken as a specimen of town gossip. A later interpolation in the *Chronique* adds to the words "abandoned by his servants" the words "to rush upon his belongings"; which is still more apocryphal.

> Before his flight he received two sword-blows, one on the top of his head, in the middle of his tonsure, the other on one of his fingers: his servants ran up the street crying "Arms!" and "Murder!", and trying to rouse help for their master. The King was very angry at this affair, and ordered investigations to be made and the facts discovered, but nothing was found out, and the situation remained thus; although some people said afterwards that M. de Villers le Boscage had had this done for the love of Jehanne du Bois, of whom he was amorous.

It is a pretty picture of a Prince of the Church, and contemplating it one recalls that profound observation of the heathen convert mentioned by Montaigne, who, when faced with a representative of Holy Church somewhat resembling Balue, became all the more strongly confirmed in the Faith, because (as he said) what Divine force must the Faith have, to maintain such glory and dignity with servants so vicious.

Here is a different type of prelate, less picturesque because more common:

> The first day of May 1472 there took place in Paris a very great and notable procession in the church of Paris (Notre Dame), with a solemn sermon by a doctor of theology, Master Jehan Brete, a native of Tours; who announced, among other things, that the King, having a notable confidence in the blessed and glorious Mary, prayed and exhorted his good subjects, inhabitants and citizens of his town of Paris, that now and henceforth, at noon, when the great bell of the aforesaid church of Paris sounded, they should each and all bend a knee to the ground and say an *Ave Maria* for the gift of good peace and union to the Kingdom of France.
>
> And after the said procession was over, the reverend Father in God, Monseigneur the Bishop of Paris, fell ill of some malady and the same day departed this life, which was a great loss and sorely bewailed, for he was a good and saintly man and a great clerk. On this day there gathered in his episcopal palace a great crowd of the populace of Paris, men, women, and children, who came to see him lying dead in his *chapelle haulte* at the end of the great hall; and there the said populace very piteously wept and devoutly prayed for his good estate, and on taking leave kissed his feet and hands.

Jehan de Roye affords a decorative glimpse of the ceremonies pertaining to the entertainment of a Queen by a subject at this time:

> On Thursday, the tenth of September 1467, the Queen, with my aforesaid lady of Bourbon, Mademoiselle Bonne de Savoie, sister of the Queen, and many ladies in waiting, supped at the house of Master Jehan Dauvet, First President of Parliament, and were by him received and feasted very notably and richly (*moult notablement et à grant largesse*). There he had caused to be prepared four very fine baths, richly adorned (*quatre moult beaulx baings et richement adornez*), expecting that the Queen would bathe; but she refrained, feeling a little unwell, and also because the weather was dangerous. But in the said baths there bathed my Lady of Bourbon and Mlle. Bonne de Savoie, and in the baths adjoining Madame de Monglat and Perrette de Chalon, a bourgeoise of Paris.

One imagines the plain, shy, devout little Queen—Louis' second wife, Charlotte of Savoy—being received amid the blaze of wax tapers and the music of lutes, while her Parliamentary host, bowing low, gravely invites her and her ladies to retire to the bath; undoubtedly before the feast begins. Charlotte's is rather an attractive figure than otherwise, a gentle, even timid nature; there is a story of her arriving at Tours one night after the city gates had been closed, and the Mayor refusing to admit her escort, and the Queen waiting patiently outside the gates until he hurried down, having discovered who it was, to make his excuses. She seems to have been fond of her difficult husband, who certainly kept his oath of fidelity after the death of her baby son François. Being what she was, one can almost hear her declining to bathe, declining mildly, smilingly, almost apologetically, for fear of hurting her host's feelings. Parenthetically it must be observed that this provision of the baths was no isolated freak, but a habit of the age, though the modern uninstructed cling stubbornly to the fable of a Middle Ages which never washed. On the contrary, one of the indictments hurled by the tempestuous friar Maillard against the Parisians of his day, the mass of the Parisians, is that they indulge themselves too freely in the public hot baths, *étuves,* which had been established in Paris for centuries (there were twenty-six in Paris at the end of the thirteenth century, to a population of less than 200,000). In these baths, says Maillard, you bathe two or three times a day; in the mineral baths you often stay immersed for ten hours at a time. And he proceeds to scourge his fellow-citizens for their share in the gallantry which, as may easily be assumed, often attached to such places of refreshment. It is to the age of the Johnsons with no passion for clean linen (or for soap and water),[17] the Boswells of the permanently dirty neck (a distinguishing feature recorded by the amiable "Rainy Day" Smith in his *Life of Nollekens*), and the hearty and unhygienic Fredericks of Prussia, that the undoubted stigma must cling.

Jehan de Roye's Journal has an especial attraction for students of the poetry of François Villon, in that at least three personages to whom Villon makes jocular or mocking reference are shown by the *Chronique scandaleuse* to be no dream-figures, but vividly alive. First, the ominous figure of Henry Cousin, Master-Executioner of Paris, to whom the vindictive poet hands over a rival in love:

Item, et a Noel Jolis,
Autre chose je ne luy donne
Fors plain poing d'osiers frez cueillis
En mon jardin: je l'abandonne.
Chastoy est une belle aumosne,
Ame n'en doit estre marry:
Unze vins coups luy en ordonne
Par les mains de Maistre Henry.

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[17] A celebrated story, whether authentic or not I forget, of this very great and good man may here bear repetition. He was traveling in a coach, and a lady with sensitive olfactories found it necessary to complain that he smelt. Instantly the spirit of the grammarian flared up: "Nay, Madam, give me leave to correct you. You smell; I stink."

[Item, to Noel Well-Beseen
No other gift I do ordain
Than both hands full of osiers green
Out of my garden freshly ta'en:
(One should to chastisement be fain;
In sooth it is fair almsgiving)—
Eleven-score strokes laid on amain,
Of Master Hal's administ'ring.]
(PAYNE: *G. T., cxlii.*)

Maistre Henry Cousin had a son, apprenticed to him in his high mystic craft, whose name (or nickname) was Petit-Jehan; and Petit-Jehan's first important professional engagement was the execution of Louis de Luxembourg, Comte de Saint-Pol, Constable of France, for high treason in December 19, 1475. Jehan de Roye was an eyewitness. The scaffold, covered with a carpet powdered with fleur-de-lys, is set up in the Place de Grève: on it, silhouetted against the cold winter afternoon sky, at the hour of Vespers, stand two waiting figures, Master Henry Cousin, leaning on his sword—the Constable Saint-Pol is to die like a gentleman, and not to kick in a rope's-end like the commonalty—and his son Petit-Jehan. It is Petit-Jehan who deftly snips away the hair from the Constable's neck, blindfolds him with a band of scarlet velvet, and then, kneeling, implores his pardon in the traditional manner. It is Master Henry, now grown aged in office and too uncertain in his handling of the weapon of justice, who then hands the sword to his son; and Petit-Jehan, already a skillful operator, heaves up the great blade and brings it whistling down with such Hagen-like exactitude and force that the Constable's body falls to the carpet before the flying head. It is what is called in professional circles a very pretty bit of work. The great sword (already worn with service in Master Henry's hands) is chipped beyond repair by the blow, and the Town of Paris has later to supply another.

Petit-Jehan Cousin, the virtuoso, had an unpleasant manner in private life. He owed money (I abridge the account of Jehan de Roye) to a carpenter named Oudin du Bust, a native of Picardy, and was in the habit of bullying and thrashing his creditor whenever the question of repayment cropped up. Oudin du Bust, not unreasonably tiring of this in time, consulted four friends, a sergeant, a plumber, a goldsmith, and a jewelry dealer, with the result that one August night in 1477, as Petit-Jehan was turning the corner of the Rue de Guernelles, by the Porte St. Honoré, the sergeant met him, and pointing out three men following him, took his arm very amiably and urged him to have no fear of them. Within the next minute a flying stone had knocked Petit-Jehan senseless to the ground and a lance-thrust had finished him off. The assassins fled immediately to sanctuary to the Celestines, were dislodged by the Provost's men, tried, and duly hanged by the hand of Master Henry Cousin, father of their victim. They were, adds Jehan de Roye dispassionately, handsome lads—*très beaulx jeunes hommes*. The capable hands of Henry Cousin were more than once within an inch of the neck of a less handsome lad: Villon himself.

The second Villon personage is Master Ythier Marchant, a somber figure whose share in a poison-plot against Louis XI in 1474 involved him and his agent in a terrible vengeance. He is twice mentioned by the poet, who appears to have known him more or less intimately (unless the intention is sarcasm): in the *Petit Testament:*

> *Item, a maistre Ythier Marchant,*
> *Auquel je me sens tres tenu,*
> *Laisse mon branc d'acier tranchant . . .*

[Item, my trenchant sword of steel
I leave to Master Ythier
Marchant—to whom myself I feel
No little bounden . . .]
(PAYNE: *P.T. xi*)

and in the *Grant Testament:*

Item, a maistre Ythier Marchant,
Auquel mon branc laissay jadis,
Donne, mais qu'il le mette en chant,
Ce lay contenant des vers dix,
Et, au luz, ung De Profundis
Pour ses anciennes amours
Desquelles le nom je ne dis,
Car il me hairoit a tous jours.

[Item, to Master Ythier,
To whom I left my sword of yore,
I give (to set to song) this Lay,
Containing verses half a score—
Being a *De Profundis* for
His love of once upon a day:
Her name I must not tell you, or
He'd hate me like the deuce alway.]
(PAYNE: *G.T. lxxxiv*)

There follows immediately on this the plaintive rondeau, translated by Rossetti,

Death, of thee do I make my moan,
Who hadst my lady away from me, (etc.)

Master Ythier Marchant in 1471 had left the service of Louis XI and passed into the service of Charles of France, Louis' younger brother, the *petit seigneur* Charles, who was such a thorn in Louis' side. Master Ythier was a personage of some importance, and had taken a responsible part in the abortive negotiations for marriage between Charles of France and Marie of Burgundy. After Charles' death in 1472 Louis XI, who never wasted time on unserviceable men, went out of his way to attract Master Ythier back, offering him a thousand livres annual salary and the office of Master of Accounts. But Master Ythier Marchant had other fish to fry. Master Ythier had a clerk named Jehan Hardi, who was arrested in 1474 on an unanswerable charge of attempting to poison the King by suborning his sauce-maker and Colinet, his chef; in which plot Ythier Marchant his employer and the Duke of Burgundy were equally involved. Louis XI, to whom his chef had immediately reported Hardi's proposals (poison for the King's food, and a reward of 20,000 gold crowns) was, according to Jehan de Roye, greatly astounded and frightened (*moult esbahy et espoventé*), and after personally examining his would-be assassin ordered an exemplary punishment. Jehan Hardi was tried by the Court of Parliament in March 1474 and sentenced to be beheaded and dismembered, his head to be exhibited on a lance in front of the Hôtel de Ville, his arms and legs to be despatched for exhibition to four good (or loyal) towns at the four extremities of the kingdom, each member bearing an inscription showing forth his crime, his body to be burned to ashes before the Hotel de Ville; and further (I quote Jehan de Roye):

> The houses belonging to the said Jehan Hardi to be razed to the ground, with the house in which he was born, and their sites kept clear of building forever, and inscriptions to be affixed showing the enormity of the said Hardi's crime and the reason for the said demolition.
>
> And the said Hardi was executed on the Thursday, there having been sent to him, for the solace of his soul and conscience, a notable doctor in theology, Master Jehan Hue. And on the Saturday following, towards midnight, the head of the said Hardi was abstracted, by whom is not known, from the lance on the scaffold and thrown into a cellar near by.

So much for the agent, whom Jehan de Roye describes as *fol et enragé et non aiant Dieu devant ses yeulx,* raging mad, and not having the fear of God before his eyes. The principal, Master Ythier Marchant, Villon's legatee, was arrested and thrown into prison, where he died mysteriously soon afterwards. "Since he (the Duke of Brittany) is so fond of poisoners," writes Louis XI bitterly to the Seigneur de Lascun in August 1476, "and cherishes them so dearly, I will take some trouble to get Master Ythier Marchant again to send to him."

The third personage of Villon's circle mentioned in the *Chronique scandaleuse* is a simple and more engaging ruffian: Casin Cholet, duck-stealer and burglar, a close friend of the blackguard poet, who makes him and his inseparable associate in sneak-thieving, Jehan le Loup, three bequests:

Item, au Loup et a Cholet
Je laisse a la fois ung canart
Prins sur les murs, comme on souloit,
Envers les fossez, sur le tart;
Et a chascun ung grant tabart
De cordelier jusques aux piez,
Busche, charbon et pois au lart,
Et mes houseaulx sans avantpiez.

[To Jehan le Loup and Casin Cholet he bequeaths a duck, caught as of old in the moat of Paris; also a friar's robe, wood, charcoal, bacon, peas, and his old boots. The robe to hide their plunder.]

and in the *Grant Testament:*

Item, ne vueil plus que Cholet
Dolle, trenche, douve ne boise,
Relie broc ne tonnelet,
Mais tous ses oustilz changier voise
A une espee lyonnoise
Et retiengne le hutinet:
Combien qu'il n'ayme bruyt ne noise,
Si luy plaist il ung tantinet.

Item, je donne a Jehan le Lou,
Homme de bien et bon marchant,
Pour ce qu'il eſt linget et flou,
Et que Cholet eſt mal serchant,
Ung beau petit chiennet couchant
Qui ne laira poullaille en voye,
Ung long tabart, et bien cachant,
Pour les mussier, qu'on ne les voye.

[He gives to Cholet no workman's tools. Let him change his tools for a Lyons sword. It will be useful to him in his quarrels.]

[He gives to Jehan le Loup "ung long tabart" (to cover his robberies), and a young setter to help to catch the fowls he is sure to steal.]

Casin Cholet, described vaguely on the charge-sheets as a wine-cooper, was implicated with Villon and his companions in the celebrated night-burglary at the College of Navarre in Paris at Chriſtmas, 1456, though the charge was not brought home to him. A few years later he became (like his friend Jehan le Loup) a sergeant of the Châtelet: of which office M. Gaſton Paris has observed that at this period there was often little to choose between some of the Châtelet sergeants and the criminals they arreſted. Cholet makes one brief and dazzling appearance in French hiſtory in July 1465. In that month the Burgundians, who lay at St. Denis and were threatening Paris,[18] made an attack on the St. Denis gate, and after a fierce scrimmage were beaten off (*moult asprement et vaillament*) by the Parisians of that quarter. Here Casin Cholet enters the diary of Jehan de Roye:

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[18] In the September Jehan de Roye reports that the enemy lying before the walls made *"several ballades, rondeaux, defamatory libels and other things"* with intent to bring suspicion on some of Louis' entourage and cause him to dismiss them. A charming touch, which the progress of chemical warfare has probably rendered obsolete.

> And during the said skirmish there was a rascal sergeant of the Châtelet of Paris named Casin Cholet, who, running hell for leather (*courant fort eschaufé*) through a number of the streets of Paris cried in a loud voice these words: "Tumble into your houses (*Boutez vous tous en voz maisons*) and bar your doors, the Burgundians have broken into Paris!" And on account of the affright he thus caused, many women with child were brought to bed before their time, and others died or lost their reason.[19]

A month later Master Cholet receives his reward:

> On Tuesday, the fourteenth of the said month of August, Casin Cholet, of whom mention has been made already, having run about the streets of Paris crying *"Boutez vous,"* etc., and having since been imprisoned by order of the Provost of Paris, was sentenced to be flogged at all the crossroads of the said town, deprived of all royal office, and to be kept another month in prison on bread and water. And accordingly he was taken to be flogged at the said crossroads, in a foul, ugly, dirty cart (*ung ort, vilain, et paillart tumbereau*), which had just been used for carting filth to the rubbish-ground; and as he was being flogged at the said crossroads the crowd cried loudly to the executioner: "Lay on hard, do not spare this rascal, for he deserves much worse!"[20]

In which discomfortable position Casin Cholet makes his exit from history forever.

With one more vivid scene, essentially of the time, we may finish with Jehan de Roye also.

> In the same year (1479) on Tuesday, the second day of March, the body of one Laurens Guernier, a native of the town of Provins, who had by sentence of the Court of Parliament been hanged on the gibbet of Paris (Montfaucon) a year and a half previously for the murder of a collector or receiver of taxes at Provins, of which crime he had received remission which had not been confirmed by the said Court, was, at the prayer of his brother, taken down from the gibbet by Henry Cousin, executioner of high justice of Paris, and placed on a bier and taken into Paris by the Porte St. Denis. There went before the bier four criers of the town of Paris sounding their clappers and

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[19] Commynes also reports this incident, but without names.

[20] Some ancient editions of the *Chronique* place these words in the mouth of Louis XI.

bearing on their breaſts the arms of the said Guernier, and around the bier were carried four candles and eight torches, the bearers wearing black clothes, with arms as before. So the body was borne through Paris to the Porte St. Antoine, where it was placed on a chariot covered with black, to be conveyed to Provins for burial. And one of the said criers went before the body, crying: "Good people, say a *Pater Noſter* for the soul of Laurens Guernier, during his life an inhabitant of Provins, recently found dead beneath an oak! (*nouvellement trouvé mort soubz ung chesne.*) Pray that God grant him good mercy!"

The Parisian background to all these scenes may be filled in with a few brief ſtrokes. There is the cluſtered foreſt of Gothic spires; the flurry and jangle of a hundred bells; the tall, ſteep-roofed, gabled houses with their carvings and gay tiles and bright-painted creaking signs, leaning together, springing from the cobbles; the many-arched bridges, lined thick with houses, so that the turbulent Seine can hardly be seen rushing underneath; the glowering mass of the Grand-Châtelet and Petit-Châtelet prisons, with their swollen round towers and pointed *tourelles* and weathercocks; the ſteep University quarter, swarming with clamorous youth; the vaſt anchored *nef* of Notre Dame, bird-encircled; the many-colored ſtreets, and that Parisian mud, famous for consiſtency and *bouquet;* the clatter of hoofs, the cries of peddlers, cheap-jacks, and showmen, the shrill clamor of the Halles, the long *bourdon* of the town; the changing, melting crowd, bourgeois, friars, men-at-arms, ſtudents, fishwives, town-trollops, exquisites. Againſt the mellow dark Gothic of the beautiful houses, with their lower ſtoreys carved with grotesques, of which a few linger on into our age at Bourges and Lisieux and Chinon and elsewhere, the dress of the citizens shows in high relief; there is much fur, and, for the middle and upper classes, velvet and silk and lace; everywhere bright hose, and colored gowns and jackets and liveries of scarlet, violet, blue, yellow, and the hanging sleeves and tall *hennin* of the women. The account-books of a prominent Parisian tailor, Colin de Lormoye, at the sign of the Pewter Plate in the Rue de la Harpe, preserve the price of middle-class clothes at this period. His customers are of the University quarter and the upper bourgeoisie. For making a cloak (*houppelande*) he charges 26 sols, for a jacket (*cotte*) 10 sols. The plain tailoring of the women of the upper bourgeoisie is not too expensive, as may be perceived:

(1441-1444)

Item, a simple gown for Mademoiselle Guillemette: for this	vj sols Parisis
Item, three cloaks of scarlet for Mlle. la Sanguine, that is to say, two of vermilion and one violet: for making these three	xij sols Parisis
Item, a gray cloak for the baby	iij sols Parisis

But these are everyday gowns. For ceremonial and holiday wear there is richer stuff. Certainly the young petulant beauty who leads her new-married husband so successfully by the nose in the first scene of the *Quinze Joyes de Mariage* (1464), that gay and subtle little satire, would turn up her own pretty one at Master de Lormoye's "simple gowns." A little of this dialogue is worth quoting here. It is a bedtime scene: he is for lovemaking, she is preoccupied, pensive, and cold. At length, after anxious enquiries: "Then," she says, "since you ask I will tell you. You know, my dear," (says she) "the other day I was at such and such a festivity, where you sent me, for I did not much want to go; and when I got there I do believe there was not a single woman there, of however low condition, as badly dressed as I was! I do not say it in my own praise, but God be thanked! I am of as good family as any, gentle or bourgeoise—you can ask anyone who knows the genealogies. And I do not tell you this for my own sake either, because it does not matter to me how I am dressed, but I feel ashamed for your sake, and your friends'."—"Alas, my dear," (says he with a grimace) "what was worn at this event?"—"By my faith," (says she) "there was no woman there of my rank who had not on a scarlet gown, or a Malines gown, or one of fine green trimmed with good grey fur or small ermine, with long sleeves and a forward hood *à grant cruche,* and silk scarves and ribbons of red or green hanging right down to the ground, all in the latest mode; and there was I in my wedding-gown, which is very shabby and too short, because I have grown since it was made for me; for I was still a young girl when I married you, even if the sort of life I have had since has worn me out so that I look more like my own mother. Really, I was so ashamed among them all that it put me out of countenance! and it made me feel all the more ashamed when the lady of such a house and the wife of so-and-so said to me, before everybody, that it was a great shame I had no nicer clothes; and by my faith, they have not called on me for a long time!"

And the unhappy husband, subject of Love and Louis XI, groans and begins feebly to mumble that he is short of money for the moment, what with the recent expense of furnishing the new house, urgent repairs to the barn roof, etc., etc.: and she sulks, and cries, and is furious, and (what is worse) becomes a gentle sainted martyr, pale and cold, and sighs, and with tragic patience resigns herself to persecution, neglect and death, and goes through the whole feminine gamut. The comedy lasts two nights, after which he wavers and comes to heel and promises her a gown for his cousin's wedding.

"I will go to no festivity this year," she says decisively.

"By my faith, my dear," he says, "you shall, and you shall have what you ask."

"What I ask?" she repeats, opening her eyes. "But I am certainly not asking you for anything! God knows I have said nothing about it to you because I want to look pretty, for I would just as soon never go outside our house, except to church. I told you simply because of what other people are saying. I know all about it from my godmother, who hears plenty of such talk, and has told me." And the inevitable result swiftly arrives: a new gown costing fifty or sixty gold crowns. "And very often," adds the author, "it happens that she is so artful that she knows this well enough, and laughs consumedly to herself under the bedclothes."

It might have been written yesterday.

Absorption for any space of time in the verse of Villon inevitably gives to the mind a permanent impression of this Paris of Louis XI as being always wintry, black slush in the streets, snow crusted on the roofs, black icy water; indoors, in the roaring taverns, in the comfortable houses of the bourgeoisie, blazing log-fires, and loud talk, and snatches of song, bulging window-panes glowing orange against a gray brooding sky. Even for the poor winter must have been relatively pleasanter than summer in fifteenth century Paris, though the documents concerning Villon's homicide in 1455 give a fleeting, pleasant enough impression of a clear June evening after Corpus Christi. The stench of the Paris mud, which a score of sanitary ordinances in preceding reigns could not annihilate—Boileau and John Evelyn are still complaining of it a couple of centuries later. "It smells," says Evelyn in his diary, "as though Sulphure were mingled with the mud"—must have been intolerable in the heat. Winter, again, brought the fervent joys of Christmas, the high feast of all the year, the saturnalia of Epiphany, the awakened benevolence of warm human hearts. It is round about this festival,

Sur le Noel, morte saison,
Que les loups se vivent de vent,
Et qu'on se tient en sa maison
Pour le frimas, pres du tison,

[Hard by the dead of Christmas time,
When upon wind the wolves are fed
  And for the rigour of the rime
  One hugs the hearth from None to Prime. . . .]
(PAYNE: *P.T.* II)

that life is happiest throughout the centuries, and Dickens well knew it—Dickens, who lived amid the smugness and fatted horror of the Victorian Utilitarians. If Dickens, as is obvious, had no conception of the Catholic significance of the Christmas Feast, that great glowing heart nevertheless instinctively answered the immemorial call, and some of his finest Christmas pages might have been written in the ages he despised, in common with most of his generation. *Gavisi sunt gaudio magno valde.*

The evidence of the Bourgeois of Paris is eloquent enough of the years immediately preceding Louis XI's rule. Little need be added to it. There were more than 20,000 abandoned houses in Paris in 1423, according to another document. The rough and ready condition of municipal hygiene, though not so primitive as is generally imagined (here again the wars are to blame), favored the epidemics which visited the town at intervals. There is no industrial Hell in the English Midlands today which cannot point a scornful finger at medieval Paris (or for that matter, at late Georgian Edinburgh); and it would be difficult to find a parallel in our bright age for the conditions in which the Parisian poor lived under Louis XI, except in some modern London or Glasgow slum owned by a rich man.

Louis XI, who did so much for his dear town of Tours, did little directly for Paris, where he did not live, whose citizens he did not love, except in the reorganization of public services, finance, administration, justice. It is not until the reign of François I, in the beginning of the Renaissance, that the Monarchy takes over the direction of public works in Paris. Charles VII issued a group of ten ordinances for the cleansing of the Paris streets, dividing the town into seven sectors and establishing a scavenging service. At Tours Louis XI issued stringent orders to the same purpose. Modern Paris has few mementoes to show of Louis' reign: among them are the superb Hôtel de Cluny, begun in 1480, and the town-house of the Archbishops of Sens, in the Rue du Figuier, built in the same year. Louis' residence during his brief visits to the capital, the palace of the Tournelles, which stood on one side of the present Place des Vosges, has vanished, and with it most of the churches rebuilt and enlarged in his reign.

Ære perennius. If one would seek his monument, it is in the history of France.

§ 5

The awakening of France from death to life began actually on the twenty-eighth of April 1429, when to the singing of *Veni Creator Spiritus* a small determined force started from Blois to succor the besieged in Orleans; a force with high hearts and eyes shining, at their head a Maid of eighteen on horseback bearing a silk-fringed white banner embroidered with fleurs-de-lys and a Christ in glory, with the device *Jhesu Maria.* It is no part of the intention of this chapter to recount in detail the miracle of St. Joan; but certain actual aspects of her, as opposed to legend, may be briefly glanced at here. Her strong shining figure, like the strong shining figure of St. Francis of Assisi, has been sentimentalized and sugared over damnably by persons of vague conviction and Anglo-Saxon temperament; and as if it were not enough for Voltaire to bespatter her with filth and Anatole France (or, as it appears, his drudge) to smear her memory with a pale film of subtler poison, Mr. Bernard Shaw must needs bustle in and make her a female Boss and a forerunner of the Reformation.

From the testimony of her contemporaries one may clearly perceive St. Joan. She is a healthy country girl, with clear and joyous features; of middle height, black-haired, black-eyed, (her eyes are large), straight-shouldered; in a sense beautiful—in the sense of her fresh youth and vitality of body and spirit, in her shining piety, in the shapeliness of her limbs, the clarity of her voice, the frank direct gaze of her eyes, her poise, the sureness of her every action. Her bodily strength, endurance, and energy are the admiration of the toughest men-at-arms of the English wars. Her virginity surrounds her like an aureole; not a simpering, prudish virginity, but that of a Diana, fearless and imperial. She rides with her troops, exercises with them in arms, waters horses with them, shares their hardships, laughs and jests with them; at her trial her judges will bring up this rustic freedom of speech as an accusation against her. She manages a horse with consummate skill, and can master the most evil brute; and she can pass entire days and nights on horseback in her white plate-armor without flinching. She, this girl of eighteen, has the art of war at her finger-tips; Alençon and every other contemporary expert witness are agreed in this. And she retains, with all her other qualities, a woman's love of finery; when she is not in armor she delights in silks and cloth-of-gold and fur, the trappings of knighthood, and fine woman's gowns.

The English were dumbfounded at her apparition. Their amazement and fury echo down the ages still. "This disciple and bloodhound of the Devil called *la Pucelle,*" writes Bedford to his King, "who makes use of false enchantments and sorceries . . ." "Never," cries Suffolk, the English commander at Orleans, "have I heard tell of such a one, unless she be a devil from Hell!" The sincerity of the English is unquestionable. Did not sorcery alone explain the inexplicable victories, one after another, of the *limier du deable,* the Armagnac Whore? Amid all the fantasies of Mr. Shaw's thesis there is one line at least in which he accurately strikes the gold. "The English," cries the indignant Devonshire chaplain Stogumber, "are never fairly beaten!" This speech, which is customarily received in the theater with laughter as a characteristic *boutade,* is an historically exact reflection of the English sentiment of that time, at least. We quite honestly believed ourselves to be the victims of diabolism, and that Englishman's cry at Rouen, "We are lost! We have burned a Saint!" was the cry of an eccentric—or an illuminate. It was an English soldier who hastily tied together two sticks in the shape of the Cross and gave it to the Maid on her pyre; yet it might well be that this was but a manifestation of the spontaneous, perennial good-nature of the lower English, and one can hear the man—what was his name? Jack Burford? Dick Hawke? Tom Jolly? Black Harry? Tom Reid? In the pay-roll of the English troops before Orleans there are several such names, smacking of the good English soil—shamefacedly explaining to his comrades in his inarticulate way after the day's parade. "Poor little devil. . . . Couldn't 'elp feeling, some'ow. . . . 'Ard luck. . . . Well, what would *you* 'a done? The 'ell you would! . . . Well, she was a skirt any'ow, wasn't she? . . ." The real feeling of the English, the Catholic English, at the fires of Rouen is amply displayed in the impatient shout when Cauchon, Bishop of Beauvais, having triumphed in his evil, is longwindedly reading out the sentence: "Hey, are you going to give us our dinner here?"

As these words are written [21] all the bells of Orleans are clashing in celebration of the five hundredth centenary of St. Joan's deliverance of the city, and in the national procession to the Cathedral is the British Ambassador, a British Cardinal, and three British Bishops. One may imagine the enduring round-eyed wonder of those English ghosts of the siege who flit to and fro in Orleans when night has fallen.

So many misconceptions cling around the Maid. Thus, she was never given official command of the French army. What Charles VII gave her was her commission as a *chef de guerre,* which, as M. Funck-Brentano has pointed out, was the equivalent in rank of an eighteenth-century colonel. She had her "company," what we should now call her regiment, for whose equipment and conduct in the field and elsewhere she was responsible. The sole commander-in-chief was the King, who assembled his *chefs de guerre* in council when necessary. A chronicler of the time, describing the battle of Patay, begins: "Those who commanded the advance-guard, the Constable and the Marshal de Boussac, La Hire, Pothon, and Antoine de Chabannes, and *Jehanne la Pucelle, and other captains . . .*" Here St. Joan is seen taking equal rank with the famous fighters of the period, the war-bitten captains. It was after Orleans that she came to the front and took unofficial but unquestioned precedence. At Patay (June 18, 1429) the French forces were commanded by the Duke of Alençon as Lieutenant to the King. In the conference before the fight St. Joan's opinion was sought. She said: "Charge the English and hit hard (*frappez hardiment*); they will run." Which they did after a tough fight, headed by Sir John Fastolfe, or Falstaff, who has unjustly expiated his defeat ever since in the richest Shakespearean comedy. The great Talbot, great soldier and great gentleman, remained a prisoner in French hands.

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[21] May 7, 1929. The comment on the ceremony of the historian M. Louis Madelin, of the Académie Française, makes a fitting epilogue. "For the first time, perhaps, she has united modern France. At the spectacle of the governors of the Republic in cordial conversation with the Papal Legate, the Cercle Gambetta mingling with the Catholic societies, magistrates in red gowns preceding cardinals in scarlet cappa, tricolor flags streaming in the same wind as the banners of religious confraternities, the crowds manifestly experienced an immense joy—almost as much joy as at the sight of the British Ambassador and the Cardinal-Archbishop of Westminster walking in the procession. It seemed to these Frenchmen almost as extraordinary a thing to perceive their own union as to see, at the foot of the Maid's statue, the representatives of Great Britain, the "Goddams" whom Joan had thrown (*boutez*) out of France. . . . The heroic Saint must have rejoiced in her heart. Perhaps it was a reflection of her smile which illuminated every face, from the President's to the Legate's, from that of the Representative of England to that of the humblest artisan."

Again, St. Joan's mission ended with the coronation of Charles VII at Rheims on July 17, 1429, and she declared it when, amid the joyous roaring of "Noël!" from the crowds in the Cathedral, the clashing of bells, the lights and the incense, she knelt, weeping with happiness, and embraced Charles' knees, crying: "Sweet King, now is consummated the good pleasure of God, Who willed that you should come to Rheims to receive your worthy coronation, thereby to show that you are truly King." This was the work to which her Voices had called her, this was the supreme blow to the enemy, the creation of a rallying-point for all the French, to bring about which she had led an army triumphantly through the heart of a country occupied by the English. Compared with this the succession of towns which fell one by one, Orleans, Jargeau, Meung, Beaugency, Troyes, Châlons, Rheims, was nothing. After this achievement, although she still remained at her post, loth to take her hand from the plow, dissensions and opposition on her own side defeated her single-minded object of pushing on with the war and throwing the English out of France (*bouter les Anglois hors de France*). Charles VII, showing his worst qualities, wavered to the side of old Regnault de Chartres, his chancellor, who wished to negotiate with Burgundy. A peace-party, headed by Regnault and La Trémoïlle, forms among the Dauphin's counsellors: on the other side with St. Joan, stubborn for a sustained and successful thrust, are the soldiers, Alençon, Dunois, La Hire, Chabannes. The same conflict will renew itself with Foch, the soldier, against the politicians; and equally in 1429 the politicians win, and the unique opportunity is thrown away. The Maid is left without support by her own commanders before Paris in September, and is wounded, and fails. Charles has signed a four months' armistice with Burgundy. In October St. Joan after long insisting is allowed to take St. Pierre-le-Moutier from the Burgundians. In the following March she breaks away from Charles and his ministers and takes the field independently with Alençon at the head of a little army of her own, a tough and faithful force. One may hear her scorn for the politicians who surround the King. "You," she says to Charles, "have been at your council. I have been at mine"—meaning her communion with her Voices; the Voices which gave her her direction, the Visitants, Monseigneur Saint Michel, Provost of Paradise, St. Denis of France, Saint Catherine, Saint Margaret, of whom the vision (it is said) was granted only to one other mortal, Guy de Chailly, at whose house at Reilly she lodged with her staff a night before Orleans. . . . And so she leads her forces on Compiègne (which town has orders from Charles VII to open its gates to Burgundy, who is about to invest it) and is taken at last by the Burgundians in a sortie after hand to hand fighting on May 23, 1430, and sold to the English for 10,000 gold livres.

There is no need to follow all the twists of the triumph of Cauchon, Bishop of Beauvais, a man of evil whom Mr. Shaw has acquitted for his own purposes, the better thereby to prove the trial regular and the condemnation a crime of the Church. The satisfaction of Cauchon, the stubborn, the man of hate, the servile coadjutor of Warwick, is diabolic when at last after months of dogged examination and patient endeavor, after the long duel of wits (one girl against forty doctors!), after relentless efforts to entrap, and even to tamper with the evidence, after the massing of technical subtleties and piles of documents, after the cynical breaking of the laws of the Church by holding his prisoner chained in a State prison, exposed to the insults and worse of the roughest English soldiery (against whose intention she once had to struggle all night, and emerged victorious and exhausted), when, above all, after the fraud of the "recantation" [22] he finally earns his money and sends his victim to the fire. "Liar, pernicious, deceiver of the people, sorceress, blasphemer of God, presumptuous, enemy of the Faith of Jesus Christ, boaster, idolater, cruel, dissolute, invoker of devils, apostate, schismatic, and heretic," runs the placard to be affixed to the post of execution. And Cauchon smiles. "Farewell," he says to Warwick, "farewell, *il en est faict, faictes bonne chière*"—"it is all over with her now, enjoy yourself." His prey very nearly escaped him, for after sifting and resifting three months' evidence the learned doctors and canonists and jurisconsults of the University of Paris could return no decision, and innumerable bishops, abbots, and theologians declared that Joan's reiterated demand to be taken before the Pope must be granted. But the trick of the abjuration, followed by the trick of the forced "relapse," finishes all. The ashes of Cauchon's victim, with her heart, unconsumed by the flames—the executioner's evidence is irrefutable—are thrown into the Seine. A few years later Cauchon's own excommunicated body will be seized by the mob and cast on the rubbish-heap. Today she is raised to the Church's altars, Patroness of France, while his baleful figure is vilified even by Levantine film-producers, the least lovely of all God's creatures. So Justice prevails.

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[22] The formula of submission to the Church signed by Joan and publicly read out was barely half a dozen lines, the length of a Paternoster. The document afterwards produced as a recantation (others were produced later denying her Voices and her Mission) occupied six pages, and has a different preamble. She never abjured, and declared as much to Cauchon in his last interview with her.

This is not (I repeat) the place in which to study the trial in detail, but one may linger a moment over certain of the documents. The more the dossier is studied in M. Quicherat's edition the more magnificent does the figure of the Maid appear. What frank courage, what youth, what subtlety, what shrewdness, what force, what Divine steadfastness! And what humor! That is a pleasant story of her examination by a number of theologians at Poitiers in 1429, at the beginning of the great venture, when Charles the Dauphin is trying to make up his mind: one of them, a Friar Séguin, who has a broad Limousin brogue, demands of her: "In what sort of language do your Voices speak to you?" "In better French than yours, brother," the girl retorts instantly. And at the trial, when the subtlest doctors of the University are trying to entrap her, with what vigor does she not sometimes flash out upon them and turn defense into attack!

Q. Do you consider yourself to be in a state of grace?

A. If I am not, may God lead me into it; if I am, may He keep me in it.[23]

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[23] In the Latin of the records: *Si ego non sim, Deus ponat me; et si ego sim, Deus me teneat in illa.*

And again, at the beginning of the trial, after she has taken the oath on the Gospels to speak the truth, with a reservation that she will speak only of matters concerning the Faith:

Q. Jehanne, stand up. You refuse to take the oath?

A. I tell you again that I will speak the truth concerning matters of the Faith and facts relating to this trial, and only these.

Q. Your name and surnames?

A. At Domrémy they called me Jehannette, in France they call me Jehanne. I know nothing of my surnames.[24]

Q. What is your age?

A. Nineteen.

Q. Recite the *Pater*.

But she sees the trap. Her intelligence is too quick for them. If, being under a charge of practising magic, she recites the Lord's Prayer, she may lay herself open to a further charge of sacrilege. She answers at once:

A. You must hear me in confession.

Q. I order you to recite the *Pater*.

A. I tell you once more that I will recite it *if you will hear me in confession.*

And a tumult breaks out, the forty assessors sitting with Cauchon begin to dispute among themselves, a party of English entering the hall increases the disorder; and when calm is restored the tribunal waives the point and proceeds with the reading of the preliminary *procès-verbal*. Joan has defeated her accusers, for the first time out of many. Well did the poet Alain Chartier exclaim (and in Latin as terse as Tacitus'), describing the scene at Poitiers: *"Femina cum viris, indocta*

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[24] Her father was Jacques d'Arc, her mother Isabelle, surnamed *La Romée* on account of her having made a pilgrimage to Rome: both peasants of solid condition, and respected. The Middle Ages cared chiefly about Christian names and were careless of patronymics.

cum doctis, sola cum multis, infima de summis disputat!"—a woman against men, one untaught against doctors, one alone among many, this humble creature disputes the highest questions! At Rouen, facing her end, she again retorts with humor on the theologians whom, says the Burgundian historian Monstrelet, she could not suffer. Master Jehan Beaupère of the University de Paris is the questioner:

Q. When you perceived your Voices to be present with you, was there any light?

A. Light does not shine only on you, Master Beaupère.

One can hear the laugh shaking even that sullen determined assembly.

It is a question whether more harm has been done, if it can be done, to the peerless memory of this saint by the foulness of enemies like Voltaire or by the gush of certain admirers. They do her wrong who try to make her (as more than one has recently attempted to make her) a pacifist of the Locarno type. All gentle as she was merciful—after the Orleans victory she personally soothed and tended numbers of the wounded French and English, comforted the dying, confessed, and spent all the next day in weeping, so sorely that, as she said, "she could never have thought weeping could be so bitter!"—utterly devoid of vulgar hatreds, she never swerved from her duty, which was to chastise the enemies of France: and not only of France.[25] There is a letter in M. Quicherat's edition of the trial documents, a letter written in German, dictated by St. Joan in French to a clerk at Sully in March 1430, signed by her, addressed to the Hussites who were laying waste Bohemia. "For some time," she begins, "it has been brought to my notice, to me, Joan the Maid, that you have turned into blind pagans, Saracens, that you have abolished the True Faith and service of God's servants, that you are propagating a revolting superstition which you support with bloodshed and flame, that you are overturning holy things and reducing sacred buildings to dust and ruin. What insensate fury possesses you? Do you wish to persecute the sublime Faith, to destroy and extirpate what the all-powerful God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, have created, established, and sealed by the most sublime sacrifice, and fortified by thousands of miracles? . . . I, Joan the Maid, to tell you the round truth, would have visited you some time ago with my avenging arm if the English war had not detained me here." (*Ich, das Maedchen Johanna, haette Euch, um wahr von dem Wahren zu reden, laengst mit strafenden Arm heimgesucht.*)

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[25] Her sword she never used but once, when using the flat of it she drove some loose women from her camp.

And she adds that if there is no news of amendment she may even leave the English to themselves and turn to punish the enemies of God's Church as they deserve. It would appear that Mr. Shaw could not have read this letter.

There has lately been made some attempt by French Royalists to clear Charles VII of the charge of having abandoned St. Joan to the English and the Burgundians. Unhappily it seems impossible to clear him. His policy, his advisers' policy, in the first place, was to patch up a general peace, instead of carrying his victories (or, accurately, St. Joan's) to a smashing climax. Obviously any attempt at rescuing her would ruin all hope of this plan. There was another method, plainer, more simple than force—the exchange of an equally important prisoner for St. Joan. This prisoner, the gallant Talbot, the English captain, was in French hands, ready for exchange. No offer was made. Nothing was done. In the face of the malignant joy and intimidation of the Anglo-Burgundian triumph—when the Maid was taken prisoner the enemy's territories blazed with bonfires and rocked to the clashing of bells—Charles' weakness and the counsels of fat La Trémoïlle, the false, his evil genius, overcame him. He could join in the prayers for the Maid's safety which went up from every part of the loyal dominion (a special collect for her was said at Mass during this time), but he took no action. During the time of her victorious advance he paid her honor, had recently ennobled her and her family, had provided her with horses and fine clothes and money, and remained supine and despondent. It is half a dozen years after the fires of Rouen, after the reconciliation with Burgundy at Arras, that Charles suddenly shakes off his nonchalance, renews his youth, takes command in the field, conducts himself like a soldier and a monarch. From this time till close to his death he is a different man. His grasp is on the helm. He is awake, and realizing the rebirth of his country. He takes in hand the judicial system in 1453, cuts away a whole undergrowth of abuses, provides resident magistrates and speedier justice, for rich and poor alike, establishes the Tournelle at Paris, publishes the *coutumes,* or usages having the force of law in various parts of France. He orders the States-General to meet almost annually and the provincial states of the Three Orders also. He reforms the army, creates the first regular army of France, and sees to its discipline: it numbers about 10,000 men, with artillery, and Louis XI will praise God for it. He reforms, or begins to reform, the fiscal system, and makes the general *taille* permanent. He delivers the country from the scourge of the Flayers. He checkmates the nobles of the "Praguerie," a revolt headed by his own son, who will in his turn be menaced by the same danger and will free the Crown from internal threatenings. He sets commerce on its feet by sound external treaties. He earns the gratitude of the French merchants by reforming the currency and establishing a financial administration. He gives the French clergy the Pragmatic Sanction, a defence for the Gallicans against the excessive demands of the Roman Courts. If he falls too completely between 1444 and 1450 under the sway of Agnes Sorel, his Maintenon, it has yet to be fully shown, I think, that her ascendancy was harmful to national interests.[26]

His counselors are well chosen from the middle class: he is not only Charles the Victorious but Charles the Well-Served, a very different figure from the nerve-ridden, gloomy, shambling creature of Bourges. The Flemish historian Chastellain gives Charles not much more than his due when he writes in his high-colored way, and with some slight exaggeration: "His kingdom was desolated, waste, torn apart, like a ship disabled and battered on every side; ruined in its foundations, ruined of all its beauties and magnificences; without labourers, without inhabitants, without merchandise or justice, without rule or order, filled with brigands and thieves, filled with poverty and misery, filled with violence and exaction, filled with tyranny and inhumanity; its royal throne fallen to the ground, turned upside down, a footstool for men's feet, trampled on by the English, a mat (*torchepied*) for the pillagers. He, with great labor, brought it back to freedom and wealth."

It cannot be too constantly remembered that Charles VII began the work which Louis XI completed. Without the preliminary labor of his father towards stable government and prosperity Louis would yet have accomplished a great deal, possibly as much as he actually did accomplish, for he was a man of that kind; but when he came to the throne he found the beginnings, the foundation to a large extent laid, on which he was to erect so strong and enduring a monument.

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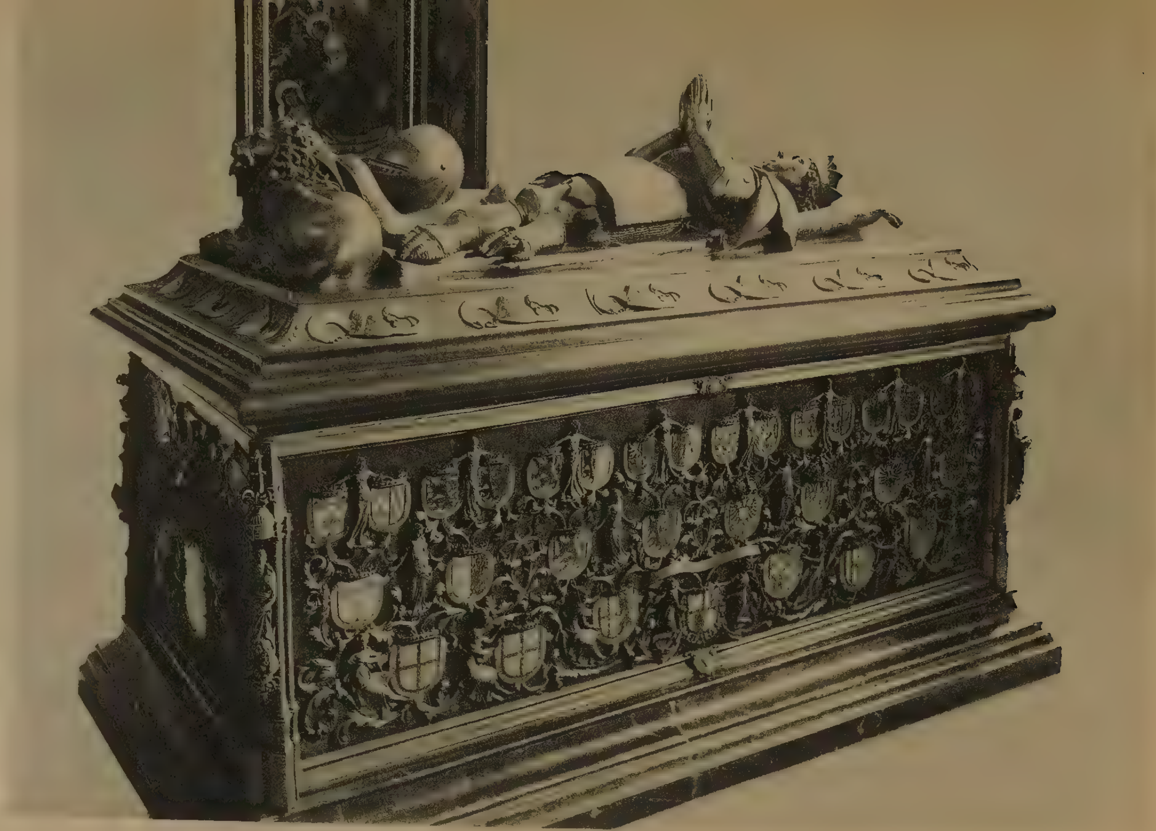
[26] The Burgundian chronicler Olivier de la Marche is definitely laudatory toward Agnes. "She was," he writes, "one of the loveliest women I ever saw, and in her way did great good for the Kingdom of France; she brought to the King's notice young warriors and men of worth (*jeunes gens d'armes et gentils compagnons*) by whom the King was very well served."

III

THE SPLENDID HOUSE



Tomb of Charles the Rash, Duke of Burgundy, at Bruges

III

THE SPLENDID HOUSE

§ 1

The reign of Louis XI saw the fall of many dangerous to the Crown: none more powerful, more notable, more splendid than the House of Burgundy. This superb great House, the fief in 1356 of young Philip the Bold, to whom his father John the Good, King of France, gave the province of Burgundy as a reward for the youth's gallantry at the battle of Poitiers, overtops the House of France at the beginning of the reign like some Victorian Peer patronizing a shabby poor relation. Before the end of the reign it has crashed to the ground forever.

The position of Burgundy in the France of this period—during the reign of Charles VII particularly—is that of a sovereign state. The Court of Duke Philip the Good blazes with the most sumptuous dignity. The Duke is the ally and equal of the Empire and the English Throne. His ambassadors rank with those of kings. His titles, orgulously appended to the documents of his chancellery, carry the sound of a fanfare: "Duke of Burgundy, of Lothier, of Brabant, and of Limbourg;

Count of Flanders, of Artois, and of Burgundy; Palatine of Hainault, Holland, Zeeland, and Namur; Marquis of the Holy Roman Empire; Seigneur of Friesland, Salins, and Malines." The rich lands of Burgundy and the proud rich Flemish towns, Utrecht, Ghent, Brussels, Bruges, are under the Duke's sway; not entirely submissively, for the dogged, heavy Flemings give trouble more than once, although the mutual jealousy of their great towns (whose franchises Burgundy is careful to respect) precludes any serious combination at any time against his rule. Philip, the richest prince in Christendom, is a Mæcenas, the patron and protector in France of arts and letters during the long bankruptcy of the Crown, lavishing great sums on the sons of the Muses, for the which may God have granted him light and peace perpetual. His library, now that Bedford has seized and sold the Royal library at the Louvre, is unrivaled in Europe; his precious manuscripts are richly bound and encrusted with gold and jewels; an army of writers, illuminators, and binders serve his genuine love of letters, and at home and abroad he has agents to swell his bookshelves. The Van Eycks are painters to the Burgundian Court. At the end of his life Philip eagerly patronizes the new art of printing. He founds and protects the Universities of Louvain and Dôle.

In aspect Philip is regal, *hault et droict de venue, joyeulx d'esprit et viste de corps,* possessing the high, quick temper of his ancestors. His attire is perpetually splendid, his existence a perpetual pageant, prefiguring Versailles. When he rides into Abbeville by the side of Louis XI, immediately after Louis' coronation, the simple townsfolk point at the shabby king and bless themselves, crying: "*Benedicite!* Is that the King of France? Twenty francs would buy him, horse, clothes and all!" At the coronation the Duke of Burgundy, doyen of the Peers, *nostre bel oncle,* shines like the sun in his splendor, appareled in costume worth a ransom. It is he who sets the crown on Louis' head, he who doffs it at the Gospel and the Elevation of the Host. It is he who lends the massy gold and silver plate for the banquet after the ceremony, having brought to Rheims a hundred and forty wagons laden with plate and new-coined gold from his own Mint, with great flocks of sheep and cattle. Everywhere *nostre bel oncle* Burgundy is seen outshining the king, moving in the foreground, benevolent and protective, dazzling the Parisians, graciously acknowledging their huzzas. The Burgundian historian Chastellain becomes lyrical at the contemplation of the spectacle and compares it freely to an allegorical mistery. Paris is Bethlehem; the House of France is Our Lady; the Duke of Burgundy is St. Joseph, natural guardian and protector of the infant Crown. Alas, the infant is already subtly meditating the shortest way to disembarrass himself of our sweet uncle's attentions; and a pretext having been swiftly discovered, the Duke, suddenly perceiving light, retires shrugging from the scene to digest the new situation. "By God!" he says, "I see what he is after."

The splendors of the daily life of a Duke of Burgundy at his great house in Dijon are faithfully recounted by one of the Burgundian historians, Olivier de la Marche, the type of the faithful servant, without that damnable hypocrisy and dissimulation which frequently stamps the faithful servant type. The Dukes of Burgundy have other fine houses: Genappe in Flanders, for example, a palace at Lille, a country seat at Hesdin, this last house full of mirrors which deform the human figure very laughably; bridges over miniature lakes which suddenly give way and plunge the guest into the water; trick pavements like the ones at Spring Garden which amused Restoration London by squirting water, when stepped on, over fine ladies; books standing on reading-desks which, when the pages are turned, shoot black dust into the reader's face; and many other ingenious *jeux de société*. But Dijon is the head and center of Burgundian splendor, the Versailles of the age, and Olivier de la Marche its chronicler. He begins his career as a page at the Burgundian Court and takes part in the splendid many-colored life there—tourneys, receptions, banquets, misteries, pageants, hunts. He sees fighting. He sees the Dauphin Louis, the future enemy of his House, taking refuge from his father at Genappe as the guest of Burgundy, and cannot deny him admiration for his qualities of mind. ("This is a Prince," he says very candidly in his Memoirs.) He takes part in the battle of Montlhéry and is knighted, and after the death of Charles the Rash at Nancy and the downfall of his House before the superior strategy and fortune of the House of France continues to serve what remains of it, now absorbed into the House of Austria by the marriage of Maximilian to Marie, heiress of Burgundy. And last of all, an old man, he sits down to complete his Memoirs, remembering the glories of the House he has served all his life. Olivier de la Marche, chief in his *genre* among the Burgundian historians, has an old-maidish passion for precision and exactitude in ceremonial and etiquette, and it is from him alone that we find exactly how the Dukes of Burgundy lived, the ordering of their house, the manner of service at meals, their domestic and military state, the gracious splendor of their daily life.

Their capital of Dijon is now but a smug, dull, prosperous provincial town preoccupied with its Faculties of Science, Letters, and Law, and driving a rich trade in wine, grain, and mustard. Yet at a café table in the principal square, on a drowsy summer afternoon under the clear Burgundian sky, overlooked by the fascinating statue of a politician in frock coat and skull cap, one may sufficiently succeed in summoning up from the past the Dijon of the Dukes, walled round with its eighteen towers and eight gates, amid the chiming of the bells of the Cathedral, with its gay-tinted Burgundian roof. Better still, the evocation has been made by Aloysius Bertrand in *Gaspard de la Nuit,* that fascinating minor classic of the romantic eighteen-thirties. "The Dijon of Philip the Bold, of John the Fearless, of Philip the Good, of Charles the Rash, its houses with their pointed gables like fools' caps, their façades striped with St. Andrew's crosses; its fortified mansions with narrow barbicans, double wickets, and courtyards paved with halberds; its churches, its Sainte-Chapelle, its abbeys, its monasteries, making a procession of belfries, steeples, spires, displaying, like banners, vitrails of gold and azure, exhibiting miraculous relics, kneeling in the somber crypts of the martyrs or at the flower-decked *reposoirs* of their gardens; its torrent of the Suzon, whose waters, flowing under one-arched wooden bridges and past flour mills, separate the territory of the Abbot of St. Bénigne from the territory of the Abbot of Saint Etienne . . . and its swarming suburbs, of which one, St. Nicolas, lies displaying its twelve streets in the sun like a fat breeding sow her teats." And again: "Dijon awakes; awakes, moves, runs! Thirty carillons at once clash in a blue sky, a sky like those old Albert Dürer painted. Crowds gather in the hostelries of the Rue Bouchepot, at the hot baths of the Porte aux Chanoines, at the military foundries of the Rue des Forges, at the fountain of the Place des Cordeliers, at the public bakeries of the Rue Bèze, at the markets of the Place Champeau, at the gibbet of the Place Morimont; burgesses, nobles, villeins, rapscallion men-at-arms, priests, monks, clerks, merchants, serving-men, Jews, Lombards, pilgrims, minstrels, officers of the Parlement and the Chambre des Comptes, officials of the Taxes, officials of the Mint, officials of the Wood-Mote, officers of the Household of the Duke; clamouring, whistling, singing, groaning, praying, cursing, in ox-carts and litters, on horseback, on mules, on St. Francis' hackney.[1]—How can one doubt this resurrection? Here, floating to the winds, is the silken standard, half green, half gold, embroidered with the arms of the Town, gules, with golden vine-branches and leaves of sinople. . . ."

"What is this cavalcade? It is the Duke riding forth to the pleasures of the hunt. Already the Duchess has preceded him to the Château of Rouvres. What a magnificent equipage! What a procession! Monseigneur spurs a dapple gray whose flanks quiver in the sharp, exhilarating morning air. Behind him caracole and parade the *Riches* of Chalon, the *Nobles* of Vienne, the *Preux* of Vergy, the *Fiers* of Neuchatel, the *bons Barons* of Beaufremont. . . . And now a herald sounds a trumpet from the tower of the Duke's house, announcing that below in the plain the hunters are releasing their falcons. The day has turned to rain, and a grayish mist veils the far-off Abbey of Cîteaux, bathing its woods in the marshes; but a ray of sunshine reveals, more close and more distinct, the Château of Talant with its terraces, the manors of the Sire de Ventoux and the Seigneur de Fontaine, whose weathercocks pierce the green clumps, the monastery of St. Maur, with its sharp-roofed dovecotes among a cloud of pigeons, the lazar-house of St. Apollinaire, which has only one door and no window, the chapel of St. Jacques de Trimolois, like a pilgrim covered with shells; and under the walls of Dijon, beyond the precincts of the Abbey of St. Bénigne, the cloisters of the Charterhouse, white as the habit of the sons of St. Bruno."

Of the Charterhouse of Dijon, which was to the Dukes of Burgundy what the Abbey of St. Denis was to the House of France, nothing remains but a few ruins. The Sainte-Chapelle, founded by Duke Hugues III, with its rich windows and statues, its choir-stalls with the blazoned arms of the thirty-one first Chevaliers of the Golden Fleece, its opulent treasury, is gone also. Louis XI deprived the town of its proud independence, the Revolution did the rest. St. Bénigne remains, where Louis, having drunk a cup of Burgundy wine at the gates, kissed the relic of St. Bénigne and received the symbolic ring of alliance on his entry into Dijon after the fall of the ducal House. This is on July 31, 1477, when the vineyards of Burgundy are swelling with their precious loads under the blazing sun. Louis establishes a postal service, transfers to Dijon the University of Dôle, builds the great castle by the Porte Guillaume to leave the Dijonnais a warning, and passes on. The glory of Dijon is past, with its last Duke. Even its great inn, the "Bell," is not what it was.

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[1] On foot.

§ 2

The document describing the domestic life of the Dukes in their great house at Dijon is called "The State of the House of Duke Charles of Burgundy, called the Bold" (*l'Estat de la Maison du Duc Charles de Bourgoigne, dit le Hardy*). And Olivier de la Marche, neat, orderly, and precise in all he undertakes, begins with the Duke's Chapel, which is served by forty ecclesiastics and lay officials. At their head is a bishop, the Duke's confessor, assisted by three Dominican friars, all three priests and confessors; "and let it not be overlooked that the aforesaid bishop and Dominican brothers are eminent clerks, very learned, and preachers also, and that they preach very often." The rest of the ducal chapel establishment consists of chaplains, singing men, organists, sacristans, and servers. Every day in the year the canonical Hours are said, every day there is High Mass and Vespers. Another official of the chapel is the Almoner, assisted by a sub-almoner, whose duty it is to keep constantly posted for the Duke's information a roll of aged and indigent persons, prisoners, poor women in labor, orphans, poor girls of marriageable age, ruined shopkeepers, and others needing relief. The Duke scans the list and signs it, and the Almoner proceeds to distribute alms derived from the Duke's daily offering at Mass. It is the Almoner, also, who says grace at the Duke's table before and after meals.

From religion we proceed to justice, in the dispensation of which the Duke is assisted by a Council consisting of his High Chancellor, the bishop (his confessor), four "notable chevaliers," eight Masters of Requests, and fifteen secretaries, ushers, and minor officials. Entry to the council in session is prohibited to any members of the Household (except chevaliers of the Order of the Golden Fleece), unless by order of the Duke or his Chancellor. Twice a week there is a public audience for the poor and obscure, *les povres et les petis,* who have any plaint against the rich and great. This court is held every Monday and Friday after dinner—observe how this digestive arrangement works sweetly to the benefit of the *povres et petis*—and the Duke is present, seated in a tapestried chair on a dais, at his feet two Masters of Requests and the *audiencier,* who recites the complaints of the petitioning poor. When the Duke is engaged in war he delegates an important amount of authority to his Provost of Marshals, who, with a guard of men-at-arms, can ride to and fro anywhere in the dominions, in Burgundy, in Brabant, Flanders, or Hainault, apprehending and judging malefactors, hearing and deciding civil and criminal pleas, and even regulating prices and governing trade.

Finance is dealt with by a Chamber of Finance,[2] with whom all Burgundian taxes are deposited. Its officials are two ecclesiastical protonotaries, both *grans seigneurs,* two notable chevaliers, the Master of the Privy Purse, the *argentier,* or Master of the Mint, who controls the expenses of the ambassadors, the Receiver-General, an *audiencier,* and some lesser officials. The Duke Charles, says Olivier de la Marche, attends meetings of the Chamber of Finance very frequently, and no account can be audited or closed without his signature or seal. When he is present he sits at the end of a table and calculates with the others: the only difference is that his counters are of gold instead of silver.

One perceives early that the Duke's attention to finance was necessary and prudent—surprisingly prudent for a man of such temperament. The Duchess's ladies of the Household alone cost in salaries and pensions 40,000 livres a year. Other *pensionnaires,* whose stipends are paid by the Master of the Mint, include six dukes and twelve other *grans personnaiges,* princes, counts, and marquises, with forty-four of lesser rank and about a hundred and thirty knights, besides men at arms. The Master of the Jewels has charge of a million of gold sterling, all the gold and silver plate (the silver alone is worth 50,000 marks), and all the costly ornaments of the chapel.

The Duke has six physicians, who stand behind him at table and advise him concerning his diet in the exact manner of Sancho Panza's physician at Barataria, though it is to be doubted whether they ever expose themselves to peril by ordering away dish after dish systematically, like that specialist. It is a pity that Molière never had a fancy to embroider this scene of the six ducal physicians. Remembering the biting comedy of the consultation scene in *L'Amour Médecin* one realizes what he might have done with it. Besides six physicians the Duke has four surgeons, all overworked, as Olivier de la Marche explains: "for the Duke is warlike, and so accustomed to fighting that what with wounds in hand-to-hand combats and wounds from gunpowder, he very often has in the Household enough work for fifty diligent surgeons." Their work is regulated to some extent by attaching one of their number to every hundred lances in the Duke's Household force. Let us remember (meditating on this matter) that this was two hundred years before Molière's bitter gibes at the Faculty, and let us admire, in respectful silence, the tough fiber of our fathers, *viros gloriosos.*

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[2] Actually four—at Dijon, Lille, Brussels, and The Hague.

We arrive at the ritual of the Ducal bed and table, which latter de la Marche describes with all the exactitude of a liturgiologist, omitting no detail of procedure or costume, no reverence or genuflexion. In the duties of the bedchamber there is neither that extreme sensibility of the eighteenth-century English nobleman who insisted on his footmen and housemaids making his bed with white kid gloving their plebeian hands, nor extreme ceremony. Among the forty *varletz de chambre*—the title is not ignominious, and many of the *varletz* were of family—are the Duke's barbers, shoemakers, and tailors. One of them, the *fourrier,* is appointed to beat and shake the ducal feather-bed daily, while those of his colleagues on duty attend to the sheets and coverlets. While this is being done a *sommellier,* or butler, holds aloft a wax torch, and after inspecting the finished operation closes and secures the bed-curtains.

So to table. The official on whom most responsibility devolves here is the Chief Pantler, or Keeper of the Pantry, who has fifty squire-assistants. "I name the Pantler first," observes Olivier de la Marche, "on account of the honour due to the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, in which bread is the substance from which the precious Body of our Lord Jesus Christ is consecrated." Here again is the liturgical note which sounds so persistently as we proceed. It is necessary to remember that the Middle Ages were so impregnated with the Faith that men everywhere, as Mr. Shane Leslie has pointed out, "expressed their deepest feeling, even of love or hate, in the familiar phrases of Holy Church." Mr. Leslie has instanced a bitter parody of one of the greatest Latin hymns, the *Pange Lingua,* which greeted the death of Piers Gaveston, favorite of a medieval English king: *Pange lingua necem Petri qui turbavit Angliam* . . . "Sing, my tongue, the death of Peter, who perturbed our English land. . . ." Similarly a man of devout piety and strong attachment to a great House might, without suspicion of sacrilege or even an error of taste, describe high ceremonies in the house of his lord in language closely and unconsciously reminiscent of the Liturgy; and indeed the inflexible manner in which the process of serving the Duke Charles with food and drink is set down oddly echoes some of the rubrics of the Mass. We may imagine that the Duke is about to dine in his great hall, with a number of chevaliers, ecclesiastics, and noble guests: a scene very like that of the Duke of Berry's dinner in the lovely miniature in the *Très-Riches Heures du Duc de Berry,* now at Chantilly. The usher on duty goes to find the Pantler of the day and escorts him to the Pantry, where the butler of the Pantry on duty hands him a damask napkin, first kissing its fringe. The Pantler places the napkin on his left shoulder, with the fringes hanging. The butler then hands him the great silver *nef* containing salt, and all three return in procession to the hall, the butler last, bearing another *nef* containing knives of silver, a small salt-cellar, a smaller *nef,* and the silver and ivory bâtons used in assaying the food before it is served to the Duke. After the

Duke has laved his hands in rosewater and wiped them on the Pantler's napkin, and the other gentlemen in order, the Pantler lifts the covers of the dishes of the first service, the *maiſtre d'hôtel* assays them, and the Pantler covers them again and hands them one by one to the gentlemen of the Household whose duty it is to serve the Duke, which they do bareheaded.

I have omitted a great deal of detail concerning the disposition of the tablecloth, the knives, and the gold and silver plate and ornaments of the table. Each has its place. The cutting of the slices of bread on which certain meats were eaten is carefully described. While this was taking place the Duke would wait, either conversing with his guests or in silence, according to his mood: then the meal begins, in its leisurely way. I have seen in a film (bearing the stamp, alas, of Hollywood) a medieval dinner episode in which it was considered good "comedy business" to make a great nobleman seize and devour his food like a hog, gnawing ferociously at a whole bird and grimacing and spitting freely meanwhile. It is unfortunate that persons who may (or may not) have seen a modern gentleman eat his food should be unable to conceive of a medieval gentleman's performing the operation in much the same way.

Olivier de la Marche turns next to the office of the ducal *échanson,* or Cup-Bearer, which, he observes, is of equal honor with that of the Pantler, "since it is from wine that the precious Blood and Body of our Lord is consecrated, and it is therefore meet that the service of bread and wine should be privileged above all other." The Cup-Bearer has the same number of squires for assistants as the Pantler. Every year in the Household of Burgundy there are consumed more than a thousand *queues* of wine—noble wine, as one may well believe, remembering the imperial vintages of the country; yet the Duke Charles himself, a man of chaste and devout life and high ideals, wedded discordantly to the Burgundy temper, is abstemious as any monk, and, what seems to us sacrilege, habitually mingles water largely with his wine. "I do not think," says de la Marche, "there can be any other prince who drinks so little wine."

The ritual of the serving of wine in many ways resembles that of the meat, though it is more elaborate, and I will pass it over, pausing only a moment over a following problem of some importance propounded by Olivier de la Marche and discussed with the gravity of a doctor of Sorbonne expounding a knotty *quaestio* from the *Summa Theologica.* The problem is this: Why is it, when the Duke's household follows him in the field, that the pennon of the *escuier-trenchant,* or carving squire, precedes the others? The conclusion arrived at is that *il a esté anciennement ordonné* (it has been so ordered since olden time). Here we perceive a good man made happy by precedent. One would not care, to echo Dr. Johnson, to speak ill of the gentleman by assuming him to be a lawyer, but in this place he takes a morbid delight in lawyers' pleasure.

We have observed the ordinary daily ritual of the ducal table. When the occasion demanded the House of Burgundy could order a feast rivalling the most dazzling efforts of the Arabian Nights or of Hollywood itself. On February 17, 1454, there was held at Lille what is called the Banquet of the Pheasant. Constantinople had recently been taken by the Turk, and the call had gone out from the Holy See and the Emperor to rally all the princes of Christendom against the menace of Mahound. Philip of Burgundy, whose perpetual dream it was to head a crusade against the infidel, acknowledged the summons and called all the princes of Burgundy and Flanders to a banquet.

There were three tables, each laden with costly plate and curious examples of the pastrycook's art. On one table a fairy castle poured forth a cascade of orange water. On another stood a monumental pasty which when opened revealed not four and twenty blackbirds but eight and twenty musicians, melodiously singing to stringed instruments. There were sweetmeats in the shape of great *nefs* under sail, of fountains (including one after the model of a fountain still famous at Brussels, distributing a stream of rosewater) and of a Gothic church containing four musicians and an organ. At regular intervals the service of dishes was interrupted by a theatrical interlude, with music. Last of all came a procession then unique, but today familiar to habitués of the film-theater as a common episode in the drawing rooms of the rich—the entry of an elephant, gorgeously caparisoned in silks, bearing on its back Olivier de la Marche himself and led by a gigantic Saracen; the whole designed to represent in allegory the captivity of the Church by the infidel. The elephant stopped opposite the Duke's seat, and a fine long discourse in verse implored his aid; after which a live pheasant wearing a collar of rich gold was presented to Philip, who rose with all his guests and took an oath to combat the Grand Turk.

The rest of the domestic ordering in the palace at Dijon may be briefly dismissed. In the kitchens are twenty-five cooks and a number of *enfans de cuisine*. The ducal confectioner, with two assistants, is of some importance, to the Duchess and her ladies chiefly. He has charge of the great silver *drageoir,* the casket holding sugar-plums, crystallized fruit, candies and preserves of all kinds, which on great feasts is handed to him by the First Chamberlain to assay, after which the Chamberlain hands it to the gentleman of highest rank present, who hands it to the Duke, and so in order. The confectioner makes all sweetmeats for the household and also the Hypocras, the true and blushful Hypocras, the well-spiced elixir of the Middle Ages. I find in a contemporary work a recipe for this fascinating drink:

> For a quart or quarter of Hypocras by the measure of Béziers, Carcassonne, or Montpellier, take five drams of fine cinnamon, selected and peeled; white ginger selected and pared 3 drams; of cloves, cardamom, mace, galingale, nutmegs, nard, altogether a dram and a quarter, most of the first and less of each of the others in order. Let a powder be made thereof, and with it put a pound and half a quarter of lump sugar, brayed and mingled with the aforesaid spices; and let wine and sugar be set and melted on a dish on the fire and mixed therewith. Then put it in the strainer, and strain it until it runs a clear red.

One more official of rank may be noted: the Fruiterer, who not only supplies all fresh and preserved fruits for the Duke's table but has charge of all the wax of the household. On the feast of Corpus Christi it is the Fruiterer's duty, at the time of the procession of the Blessed Sacrament, to hand the Duke's wax torch, ornamented with his arms, to the First Chamberlain to hand to the Duke, and so in order. But if the Corpus Christi procession is splendid, the procession of Candlemas is even more. Then you may see the entire Household of Burgundy, from the Duke Charles to the lowest scullion, walking devoutly in procession, each with his lighted candle, "by thousands," says Olivier de la Marche, "a very great sight to see" (*moult grant chose à veoir*).

The stables are governed by an *escuier d'escuyrie,* who must be strong, capable, alert, courageous, and intelligent, for he carries the Duke's standard in battle. He rules fifty assistants and the trumpeters, minstrels, players of instruments, messengers, and couriers. The Duke has his own College of Heralds, consisting of six kings-at-arms, eight heralds, and four poursuivants, who regulate such high ceremonies as assemblies of the Order of the Golden Fleece. The Duke has twelve trumpeters who, when he is engaged to ride abroad, wake him at morning with a brazen fanfare under his windows. Other music is supplied by six "high minstrels" and four players of *bas instrumens.*

With a brief glance at the war establishment of the Duke Charles we may finish this survey. His army, counting men-at-arms, archers, cavalry, and artillery, numbers about 18,000 combatants. (It is difficult to ascertain whether this number includes the knights and men-at-arms on the establishment already quoted as *pensionnaires* or not, for Olivier de la Marche's method of counting this arm is confusing.) The Duke's personal bodyguard consists of sixty-two archers, commanded by two gentlemen, and one hundred and twenty-six noblemen. In addition, two sergeants-at-arms stand always before the door of any chamber in which he may be. For every hundred lances in the army proper there is a *conducteur*—not, says Olivier de la Marche significantly, a captain, for the Duke will brook no other captain but himself. The gentlemen *conducteurs* are renewed in office once a year before the Duke, with some ceremony: a copy of the military regulations of Burgundy, "richly made and written, bound in velvet in a handsome volume and sealed with the Great Seal in green wax, with silken tags," is handed to each, after an address by the Duke, with a bâton covered in blue and white silk, the Duke's colors; they then take the oath of fidelity and obedience. As for the artillery, there are available in war time some 300 cannon, not counting numerous culverins and *hacquebuttes.* The artillery train is more than 2000 wagons, and in addition to these the Master of Artillery controls the stock of tents and pavilions for the field.

Such are some of the furnishings and order of this great House, whose dignity and splendor was regal and spacious as any Court of any time. It had one other appurtenance which gave it a position unrivaled in Europe. It was the founder and the established home of the most noble Order of the Golden Fleece.

§ 3

Once more we turn to the indefatigable Olivier de la Marche for this information, which he yields, as before, without stint and in due procedure. The Order of the Golden Fleece was founded at Bruges in the year 1429 by Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, father of Charles the Rash. Its origins are explained at length by de la Marche. First he cites the Fleece of Gold which Jason and the companions of the *Argo* ravished by Medea's enchantments from its dragon-guard in Colchis, after so many perils and high labors. Next comes the story from Holy Writ of the Fleece of Gideon and its miracle. So we come to the record of the foundation of the Order at Bruges, with an establishment of thirty-one notable chevaliers. And Olivier de la Marche, besides setting down this history, has left a record of the procedure at an assembly of the Order at Bois-le-Duc on May 8, 1431, under the presidency of its Sovereign of the time, the Archduke of Austria. The members met on the Saturday and rode to Vespers, two by two on horseback, in order of seniority of admission, preceded by fifteen heralds bearing their blazons and by the officers of the Order—the herald *Thoison d'Or,* Golden Fleece, Master Jehan le Gros, Treasurer, and the Dean of Brussels, Secretary of the Order. The vesture of each member of the Order was a gown of vermilion velvet falling to the feet and encrusted with cloth of gold, with a mantle of the same. With them went the canons of Bois-le-Duc, vested in festal copes. Last came the Sovereign of the Order, attended by sergeants and ushers. In the church the blazon of each chevalier hung over his stall. After the singing of Solemn Vespers was held the opening conclave.

On the Sunday morning the Order attended High Mass, vested as before, and at sermon-time a notable Dominican preacher addressed them on the honorable nature of their Confraternity, its privileges and its duties. At the Offertory the herald Golden Fleece appeared with candles, saying *"Venez à l'offrande"*; whereupon the members went up two by two, as their names were called, received each a lighted candle, and made each his offering. For dead members Golden Fleece himself answered. After the Mass there was a splendid banquet.

On the Monday morning the Order was present at a Mass of Requiem for dead members, wearing black gowns and mantles. On the Tuesday the Mass was in honor of the Mother of God, and the Order wore white satin; at Vespers of this day the habits of the opening day were again worn, without mantles. Wednesday was the last day of the assembly, the Mass being votive of the Holy Ghost. The calling of the roll at the conclave cannot have lacked solemnity, for in the roll given by Olivier de la Marche there are some dead and at least three "traitors" to Burgundy, whose names are thereupon expunged from the Order. These names will occur again in these pages, since their bearers had gone over to the King of France: one is Messire Philippe Pot, one of the merry companions of the *Cent Nouvelles* of Genappe and the Dauphin's close friend; another is Philippe de Crèvecoeur, who had been taken prisoner at Montlhéry and had henceforth been a loyal servant to Louis XI; and the third is Louis de Luxembourg, whose shifty politics brought him in the end to the scaffold in Paris. It is to be presumed that each of these had duly returned to Golden Fleece his golden collar with the emblem, the Golden Ram.

In 1469 Louis XI established the Order of St. Michael the Archangel, with thirty-six chevaliers, of whom one was his own unstable brother Charles. The members of the new Order wore a collar of golden shells, from which was pendent a jewel containing an image of the Archangel; their headquarters were at the Mont St. Michel, where the annual Order Mass was sung on the saint's feast, September 30. The familiar mixture of piety and politics which is Louis' temperament is once more to be seen very plainly here. His new Order was founded to the glory of God and St. Michael and as a counterblast to the universal prestige of the Golden Fleece; a shrewd stroke at Burgundy. This is the more obvious because before instituting his Order Louis borrowed the statutes of the Golden Fleece from Dunois. He studied these, consulted René King of Sicily and the Dukes of Guyenne and Bourbon, and finally drew up his own statutes, which were decorated for him by his Court painter, the celebrated Jehan Fouquet. In Fouquet's splendid miniature we see the opening assembly of the Order. Louis presides, in a long blue gown powdered with fleur-de-lys and a mantle of white silk, wearing on his head a black bonnet. Around him stand his Chevaliers, similarly gowned and mantled: a military Order sworn to live in brotherhood among themselves and to serve God, Saint Michael (whose great rock-fortress off the Norman coast has never once through the centuries fallen into the enemy's hands), Holy Church, and the King, whom they must inform when about to absent themselves. The Order, which Olivier de la Marche, always the amateur lawyer in his prim but honest way, criticizes and dismisses as not being a true Order like the

Golden Fleece by reason of its statutes, which do not provide for interior legislation, was not the crushing rival to the Burgundian Order Louis had intended, though it was, in the consecrated modern phrase, a "gesture" of value at the time. Louis himself wears the emblem in effigy on his tomb at Cléry. The Order of the Golden Fleece continued to hold its high position, and at the fall of the House of Burgundy passed, with other Burgundian appanages, to the House of Austria, and thence, with the Emperor Charles V, into Spain, where it is still flourishing in honor, with the King as its Sovereign.

This, then, was the House of Burgundy, whose history is like some rich tapestry stiff with gold and silver, or some costly illuminated manuscript ablaze with or, argent, azure, and gules: a scene crowded with heraldic and hierarchic figures, knights and ladies in glowing silks and velvets and jewels, like a parterre of flowers, charging warriors on splendid horses, banquets massy with gold and silver plate, religious ceremonies in which are employed every luxurious accessory of human craftsmanship created by God and used to His service. Everywhere there hang in the air costly perfumes and the sound of stately music. Pageants and jousts and misteries, all of the rarest kind, are the diversions of this imperial Court. No less splendidly does the great Duke ride out to war or the chase. No less splendidly does he marry. In that treasury of English medieval domestic correspondence called the Paston Letters there is a letter from John Paston at Bruges to his mother in Norfolk describing the wedding of Charles the Rash to Margaret Plantagenet, sister of Edward IV of England, on Sunday, July 3, 1468, showing that even English eyes, accustomed to the pageantry of a wealthy court, could be dazzled by Burgundy's splendor. "My Lady Margaret," writes John Paston, "was married on Sunday last past at a town that is called The Dame

[*Damme*], three miles out of Bruges, at five of the clock in the morning, and she was brought the same day to Bruges to her dinner, and there received as worshipfully as all the world could desire, as with a procession with ladies and lords, best beseen of any people that ever I saw or heard of. Many pageants were played in her way in Bruges to her welcoming, the best that ever I saw, and the same day my Lord the Bastard [Antony, Bastard of Burgundy, the witty and accomplished natural son of Philip the Good by Jehanne de Prulles] took upon him to answer twenty-four knights and gentlemen, within eight days, at jousts of peace . . . and they that have jousted with him into this day have been as richly beseen, and himself also, as cloth of gold, and silk, and silver, and goldsmith's work might make them; for of such gear, and gold, and pearls, and stones, they of the Duke's Court, neither gentlemen or gentlewomen, they want none. . . . By my truth I heard never of so great plenty as here is." And John Paston adds again, summing up the Court of Burgundy in a phrase, that he never heard of anything like it, "save King Arthur's court." [3]

The portraits of the last masters of this House may be briefly studied once more. Duke Philip the Good (1396-1467) and his son Charles are like men of haughty and violent temper, and life in the Burgundian household at the time when the Dauphin Louis is Philip's guest at Genappe is sometimes stormy. The Burgundian historian Chastellain reports verbatim one such quarrel between father and son. Duke Philip, now nearing his sixtieth year and still strong-jawed, spare, and vigorous, with prominent lips, thick eyebrows, swollen veins in his temples, an ample forehead, preserves his high nobility of bearing and his courtesy, his easy accessibility and clemency to the poor and his hauteur towards the great. There can be no question of his fundamental chivalry. He is a *grand seigneur* in the manner of Louis XIV. Like Louis XIV he has a mind, and a political mind, above the ordinary. Like Louis XV, his weakness is women. The Duke Philip's mistresses number consecutively about thirty, which is a respectable number for any man. He is passionately fond of hunting. At table he is free and merry, and his conversation is easy; but the blood of Burgundy is quickly heated, and clashes with his son Charles are frequent.

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[3] It is to be observed that this Englishman will not style Charles VII "King of France." In his letter he writes "Kyng—," intending presumably to add "of France," but immediately crosses out the word and substitutes "the Frenshe Kyng."

The scene of melodrama which Chastellain reports may or may not have been an isolated incident. The storm arises over the matter of certain regulations Charles has drawn up for his private officers. Philip, in a sudden access of fury, flings them in the fire, shouting, "Boy, do you disobey me? Out of my sight!" and pale with anger plucks out his dagger. The Duchess (unhappy woman!—but she has more spirit than the wives of some kings, and is capable of withdrawing haughtily to a convent, leaving her unmanageable husband to his amours) catches Charles by the hand and pushes him hastily outside the room, and together they take refuge in a small room adjoining an oratory, where a *clerc* of the chapel locks them in. Outside the door the Duke Philip, beside himself, rages and glares red-eyed from under his bristling eyebrows. "Let us out, my friend," says the Duchess to the *clerc*. "Quick! We must go out, or we die." The *clerc* unlocks the door, and the Duchess rushes past her husband into the chamber of the Dauphin Louis, imploring him to intercede. An edifying spectacle for the guest! The better sense of Philip the Good reasserts itself a moment, and he grimly apologizes. "Forgive me, my Lord Dauphin, and do not, I beg you, insist in your plea, for I am as yet in no frame of mind to be content with Charolais. I must show him that I am his father. Put yourself to no trouble! I can deal with him, and his mother as well, who has not improved matters." Louis throws himself on his knees in tears and earnestly begs the Duke to be clement; but Philip, boiling up again, flings away, orders his horse, throws himself into the saddle, and gallops away without riding-boots or cloak into the rain and mist of Flanders, blundering blindly into the forest, careless of direction, careless of his stumbling horse, which more than once falls and throws him, careless of his snapped sword, which wounds his thigh, bereft for the moment of ordinary reason, such is the madness of his fury. At last, lost in the depths of the forest, dragging his horse by the bridle, he arrives at a charcoal-burner's hut, drenched and exhausted. "Faith," says that honest fellow bluntly, "what food there is here is poor enough; there is nothing but a large tart and some watery cheese from the Abbey, and nothing to drink but water instead of beer." The great Duke eats a mouthful, warms himself at the fire, and pushes on to the hut of one of his foresters, where he spends the night and all next day. On his return to Genappe, whence one of his gentlemen has set out in search of him, Louis goes to him again, calms him down, and at last succeeds in bringing him to forgive Charles. An ironic scene, this of the Dauphin, who so hates his own father, reconciling father and son!

Thus Philip the Good in his declining years. Ten years or so onward and he will have sunk into second childhood, passing his days in a small room and playing with old swords and bits of old stained glass. He has been for some time subject to apoplexy. The Duchess has long since retired into the convent of the Grey Sisters of Nieupoort. On June 15, 1467, he dies, and his son, now Duke Charles, forgets their long enmity and mourns him in sincere grief. The funeral at Bruges is, as might be imagined, magnificent. Sixteen hundred wax torches burn around the old Duke's catafalque, which is covered with a pall of cloth of gold. With him passes the perfect type of the great feudal prince with all its admixture of nobility and ungovernable passions, idealism and grossness, high breeding and roughness. We, who are ruled by hidden Levantine financiers of no particular race or breeding, or morals or code or motive of any kind, save the most ignoble of human passions, greed of money, have every right to curl a lip at the medieval. One of the more obvious inconsistencies of Philip's character, which only a Thackeray could embroider with the requisite moralizings and skillful beatings on the muffled drum, is his lifelong absorption in chivalrous dreams of leading the troops of Christendom against Mahound for the Holy Sepulcher. He stayed at home instead. *Deteriora sequor.* He nevertheless made attempts to atone for this failure. He lavishly endowed the Christian communities at Jerusalem, repaired the church at Bethlehem, and established a hospice for pilgrims at Ramleh. In the church of Our Lady of Sion he founded a chapel of Burgundy, with a window bearing his blazon; and having done these things, returned to his dreams of wresting Our Lord's Sepulcher from the Sultan of Egypt and Constantinople from the Turk. The bustling modern mind turns with relief from such romantic futility to contemplate with satisfaction such a figure as that of the great contemporary merchant banker Jacques Coeur. Jacques Coeur was a business man, and far from desiring to fight the enemies of Holy Church supplied Mahound with weapons at an immense profit. When a Christian slave escaped from the Sultan of Egypt's prisons and took refuge in a galley at Alexandria belonging to Jacques Coeur, the eminent financier, who knew as well as any modern that business is business, hastened to return the captive, thereby ensuring a continuance of the Sultan's favors. It is a common mistake to believe that all the qualities so justly admired today are the fruits of modern progress and enlightenment.

Another crusade looms big in Philip's reveries. Like St. Joan, he would like to lead a force against the Hussites, who are plunging Bohemia into bloody war. St. Joan has the English on her hands, and cannot go. Philip lets his resolution dissolve in dreams.

So much for Philip the Good, whose notable choler Rabelais may have caricatured in the portrait of King Picrochole. The less balanced temper of his son Charles, which hurried him from one folly to another and finally to disaster and death before the walls of Nancy, will concern these pages frequently and need not be surveyed here.

Thus in 1477 the House of Burgundy came to its end, after menacing the House of France in one way or another for more than a hundred years. The sentiment of its Dukes, technically vassals,—Philip, indeed, was not a vassal: the treaty of Arras formally recognized his independence—was anti-French, even though they were blood relations to the French Crown. Duke Philip the Bold (1342-1404), and his son Duke Jean Sans-Peur (father of Philip the Good) sat on the Council of Regency during the minority of Charles V. of France, nephew of Philip the Bold. Both cared little for the interests of France, much for the interests of their Flemish lands. Jean Sans-Peur was actually a nationalized Fleming. Philip the Good, so long the active ally of England, welcomed the Dauphin Louis as his guest at Genappe chiefly because the gulf of enmity between Louis and his father Charles VII needed widening, if possible. Philip the Good's participation in the coronation of Louis XI (our dear uncle of Burgundy generously lent the gold and silver plate for the banquet, as we have seen, and in a score of other ways dazzled Paris and outshone the King) was hardly over before the brain in the shrewd head on which he had placed the crown was debating means of putting an end to our dear uncle's helpfulness. The French, indeed, regarded all Burgundians, *traistres bourguignons,* as foreigners, and duly hated them. At intervals there might be an end to open hostilities, but the gulf remained.

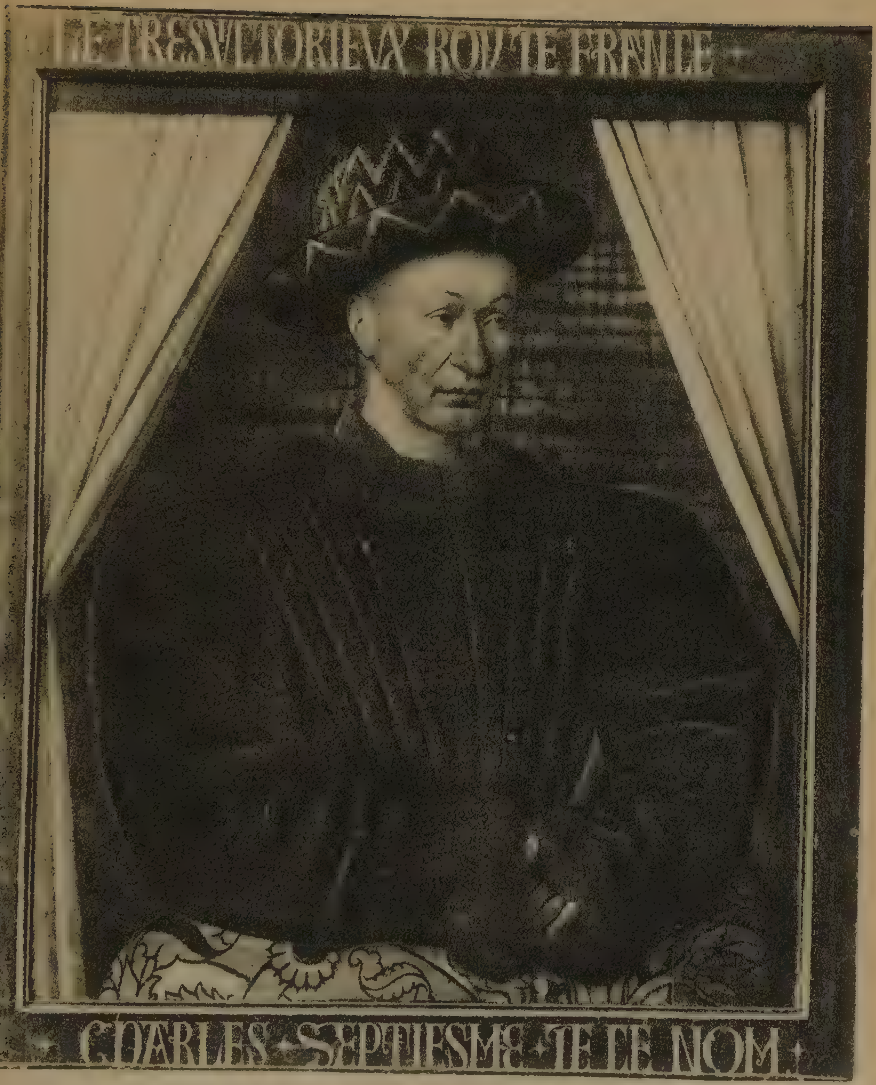
. . . On the news of the death of Charles the Rash the heiress of Burgundy, Marie de Bourgogne, at once publishes a manifesto declaring that "the Duchy of Burgundy has never formed part of the dominion of the Crown of France." But it is too late. Louis XI, almost beside himself with joy (in his correspondence at this moment one can almost see him rubbing his hands and hear his chuckles) has already warned the people of Dijon, the Burgundian capital, that he intends to prosecute his legal rights, by relationship and otherwise, to the possessions of "our dear brother of Burgundy." "You know," he adds tersely, "that you are part of the Crown and the Kingdom." And after some trouble, a lawsuit, and a fortunate accidental death Burgundy comes into the French Crown's possession finally and forever.

It is not difficult to understand the joy of the King of France.

IV

MONSIEUR LOUIS DE FRANCE

1. The Child
2. The Tired Heart
3. The Apprentice, 1436-1461
4. The Craftsman, 1461-1483


LE TRES VICTORIEVX ROY DE FRANCE
CHARLES SEPTIESME DE CE NOM

Charles VII of France
From the portrait by Jehan Fouquet in the Louvre

I

THE CHILD

THE year is 1423; the place, the archiepiscopal palace at Bourges, the temporary capital of the shrunken dominions of the King of France.

Charles VII, whom the wealthy English and Burgundians lounging in Paris derisively call King of Bourges and King of Gonesse,[1] more than fits his circumstances at this moment. The ungainly, meager figure, knock-kneed and shambling, the thick lips, the long nose (which his heir will inherit), the apathy, the peering hesitancy and dubiety of expression, of which traces still linger in Jehan Fouquet's portrait [2] of Charles the Victorious, painted in his triumphant days, much later—all these handicaps afford exquisite matter for Anglo-Burgundian jests. Charles is in this year 1423 just twenty-one years old, one year King (but uncrowned), and none too certain either of his future or of the legitimacy of his birth—for his mother, Ysabeau of Bavaria, whose looseness had been rebuked from the pulpit in her own presence by a courageous friar, had taken lovers during her regencies, in the recurring fits of her husband's madness, and had borne twelve children. It was while returning from a visit to Ysabeau, his mistress, that Louis Duke of Orleans was murdered on the night of November 23, 1407, by a gang of seventeen assassins in the pay of his enemy Jean Sans-Peur of Burgundy. A melodramatic scene, amid its fitful glare of torches. The night was pitch dark, and every house in the street, near the Porte Barbette, closely barred. Louis of Orleans, humming a love song, left the house of Queen Ysabeau and called for his two squires; as he prepared to mount his mule the assassins fell upon him from a neighboring gateway. "I am the Duke of Orleans!" he cried. "Yes," replied a voice, "we want you!" Within a few moments the Duke's body had been hacked almost in pieces and the street was empty. With such a mother (hated by the French particularly for her English sympathies and her share in the Treaty of Troyes) it is no wonder that Charles VII was constantly haunted in his youth by the specter of illegitimacy. It was not indeed until St. Joan, singling him out in his disguise among the glittering crowd that memorable day at the Chateau of Chinon, hailed him the true and rightful King—*"Ah non, gentil prince, c'estes vous, et non aultre"*—that he felt the first stirrings of belief in himself and in her.

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[1] A village to the north of Paris.

[2] Now in the Louvre.

Six years are to pass before this day shall come, and the Maid with it. Courage and energy, also, are still to come. It is a shabby, doleful, unimpressive figure which in these early summer days at Bourges awaits news of his Queen's confinement; with prayer, for Charles preserves a trust in Heaven and is devout.

His poverty at this time was not relative but absolute. Martial d'Auvergne's *Vigilles du Roy Charles VII* record that

Un jour que la Hyre et Poton
Le vindrent veoir, pour festoyement
N'avoient qu'une queue de mouton
Et deux poulets tant seulement.

[La Hyre and Poton came one day
To feast with him, and all they got
Was one sheep's-tail, as I've heard say,
And two small chickens in the pot.]
(*Les Vigilles,* I, 56)

This reflects the state of Charles' little Court. At one time in 1422 his treasury—the treasury of the rightful King of France—held exactly two florins, the rest being mortgaged to pay the rabble of Lombards, Bretons, Scots, Aragonese, Spaniards, and a few French which composed his military force. The spectacle of an anointed king with his Crown jewels in pawn is a traditional scene of burlesque: this in stark truth was Charles' position. His president of finances, Jehan Louvet, one of those surrounding him who took due advantage of his indolence, recurring fits of depression, nervous crises, and general apathy, lent him 4000 gold crowns in February 1423, five months before the birth of his heir, on a great diamond called the "Mirror." Tanneguy de Chastel, stout warrior and loyal friend, nevertheless robbed Charles of money meant to pay the troops. The wife of Boulligny the treasurer said some years later that at one time she remembered her husband and the King being able to scrape up only four crowns between them. The Queen's Household, of which an account of expenses also exists, was in the same condition. Her pocket money was 100 livres a month, a livre being worth about a franc. The only member of her house who was regularly paid, her doctor, Master Pierre Beschebieu, got eight sous a day. From November 1422 to June 1423 the Queen's income for household expenses came to 14,000 livres, and her expenses to almost exactly double.

Two other instances lighten the depressing scene with a flash of comic-pathetic relief. Charles VII, King of France, ordered and received a pair of boots. The bootmaker, learning that he would not be paid ready money, refused to allow the King to keep them. They were humbly returned to this model tradesman. In 1428 Charles' old doublets were given new sleeves; his wife was grateful to accept a gift of linen, "of which she stands in the greatest need," from the citizens of Tours. One may imagine with what pleasant gibes the Burgundians, in the massy splendor of their court, and their English friends, as superb as they, discussed such items.

It is the third of July, 1423. Charles and his wife, Marie of Anjou, a mild, quiet, devout woman, are temporarily lodged in the archbishop's palace at Bourges, a palace of noble proportion and ornate design, built by Archbishop Pierre de la Châtre in the shadow of the cathedral: the house is long since destroyed. The King shambles restlessly to and fro in his gown of *vermeille* furred with ermine; a royal vesture. Between two and four o'clock Marie of Anjou is happily delivered of a fine boy. His father's low spirits leap up. He is overjoyed, as well he might be, for the succession is secured; and before nightfall couriers are spurring north, south, east and west to give the tidings to Charles' friends and allies: to the King of Aragon and the King of Scotland, to the Pope, to the remnants of the Kingdom of France—to Berry, Touraine, Poitou, the Limousin, Auvergne, Maine, Anjou and Saintonge, the countryside of Blois and Orleans, and to scattered outposts like the noble great abbey-crowned rock fortress, so nobly named "St. Michael of the Peril of the Sea," spiring to Heaven off the Norman coast: St. Michael's Mount, holding out impregnably for the French King. All these rejoice. In Rome, too, there is rejoicing, and Martin V sends a letter to Charles and Marie. "God has sanctified you after your pain," says the Pope to the Queen. "We congratulate you in Our Lord, and bestow on you praise and blessing, for you have given a new son to Us and to the Church."

At Bourges the King's officers have bestirred themselves beforehand to decorate the royal lodging for the event. They have no tapestries. The English in Paris have commandeered all the royal furniture. But the exiled Duke of Orleans' chancellor lends some cloth-of-gold hangings, with a screen and six carpets. Some of these need repair—the screen especially has a hole in it, and has to be patched. With these the Queen's room and chapel are appareled, and in this atmosphere of makeshift and borrowing and discomfort the Dauphin Louis is born.

His immediate descent does not much endow the child. By his father he is bequeathed physical weakness, vacillation, and what is now called "temperament"; by his grandfather, insanity; by his mother, timidity. Yet in his veins flows (on his mother's side) some of the strong blood of Aragon and Anjou; the thrusting cavalier vigor of Aragon which took such a share in rolling back the Mahometan horde, wave after fighting wave, from the soil of Christian Spain, and the violent, sagacious Angevin blood which has left an indelible mark on English history. To this admixture (and to some of his male ancestors) he owes his personal courage and tenacity; the subtlety of his mind will have, when it flowers, greater affinity with the Italian genius, of which he remains through life a profound and discriminating admirer. Meanwhile his upbringing is naturally to influence his character. From the influence of his wet-nurses, one a bourgeoise of Bourges, Clémence Sillonne, the other an honest peasant, Jehanne Pouponne, he may derive at least a part of his plain vigorous directness in thought and speech and writing, his peasant passion for the French land, his peasant simplicity and shrewdness in religion, that lifelong sympathy and contact with the common people which marks him out even in that long line of his, which was always, of its nature, accessible to them. An anecdote will illustrate the easy matter-of-factness of this contact. Years hence, when Louis has long been King, he is at his private prayers in his beloved church of Cléry. Around the pillars in his vicinity, as he kneels, prowls a poor clerk who has been thrown into prison for a debt of 1500 livres, and having been released on his promise to pay, has failed, and is again about to be arrested and imprisoned for the same debt. This man observes the King carefully, and at the moment Louis rises from his knees approaches him and blurts out his trouble. "You are absolutely incapable of paying?" grunts the King. "Yes," answers the debtor. Louis (who never flings money about) pays the debt then and there, observing wryly, "You have chosen your moment well. It is only just that I should have pity on the unfortunate, seeing that I have just been begging Almighty God to have pity on me." Such incidents, observes Duclos, are as worthy of a place in history as the relation of a battle.

Here, perhaps, it is convenient and even necessary to dwell a moment, even so early in this book, on this one strong and important aspect of the French Monarchy, the Capetian Line. Its sacramental aspects will be considered in due course. Immediate *accessibility,* the age-long *right* by which the French populace could see, touch, and speak with the Crowned Executive existed throughout nearly nine hundred years. Ascending the centuries to the Capetian beginnings in the tenth century,[3] we see the Kings of France living in houses indistinguishable from those of any of their burgesses, except in size; and these houses open to any one, subject or foreigner, who had business with the monarch. In the eleventh century Guibert de Nogent lauds the simple bonhomie of the Kings of France, comparing with it unfavorably the luxury and pomp of others. Walter Map, the English hiſtorian, walks into Louis VII's house one day and engages the King in conversation. "Your King," says Louis to him, "lacks nothing—blood horses, gold, silver, silk, coſtly dishes. At the Court of France we have only bread, wine, and gaiety." Louis IX, saint, warrior, legislator, protector of arts and letters, gives juſtice to all comers, sitting in the open under a tree which has become symbolic. The terrible Philippe le Bel, his successor, whose hand is felt all over France and Italy, and in Rome itself, walks about the ſtreets of Paris like an ordinary citizen, doffing his hat to citizens who salute him. One day the Florentine Francesco da Barberino sees him ſtopped at a ſtreet-corner by three doubtful characters who have complaints to make. The King of France ſtands there patiently, his feet in the mud, liſtening to their troubles and conversing with them—a ſtate of things, exclaims Barberino, you certainly would not find among the haughty princes of Florence.

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[3] I have drawn for part of this summary on a recent lecture by M. Funck-Brentano.

So it continues down the ages, during and long paſt the time of Louis XI. In the sixteenth century the Venetian Ambassador noted that any one who wished to speak with the King of France on private business had to make his way through a press of poor persons and address him in a low voice, unless he wished to be overheard by his fellows. "The French," said another Italian, Michele Suriano, in 1581, "desire no other government than that of their kings: hence the intimacy which prevails between the king and his subjects. He treats them like companions." And another Italian diplomat of the same period observes that any one can freely approach the King while he is at dinner and talk with him, "as with any private person."

In the last years of the Capetians Louis XV, dining in public, would courteously offer fruit and ices at dessert to women and girls among the crowd who gaped behind the balustrade: for the periodical eating of meals by the Royal Family in public, the *grand couvert,* was almost part of the French Constitution. The Kings and Queens of France ate in public as they rose from bed and retired to bed in public. (Dr. Johnson was among the crowd before the Royal dinner table in 1775.) They died in public and were born in public. When Marie-Antoinette gave birth to her first child, in 1778, the Parisian populace exercised its prescriptive right of being present actually in the birth chamber. Two peering ragamuffins climbed upon the Queen's chimney-piece as she was delivered: on the great staircase and elsewhere in the palace were gathered a battalion of market women, fishwives of the Halles, porters, tradespeople, beggars. At the most splendid palace fêtes the holiday populace passed through the salons in a straggling procession. In Paris and Versailles alike the King's house was, as the French say, as open as a mill. The English traveler Arthur Young, visiting the Palace of Versailles just before the Revolution, was astonished at the casual way in which the ordinary people ("many of them," says Young, holding up his hands, "not too well dressed") strolled about the place. When the King had retired one night Young observed in the royal bed-chamber itself some poor men in shabby clothes—"And I," he adds, "was the only person who was surprised to find them there." Earlier in the century the royal servants had been compelled to clear out of the palace a rabble of beggars who tranquilly used it for the purposes of their profession, demanding alms there as if it were a street. And this, one must recollect again, was at the very end of the absolute Capetian Monarchy, in the century of Elegance and Decorum. From the beginning there had been the same freedom, the same public ownership, the same unquestioning acquiescence on the part of the Crown. It is interesting, and amusing, to compare with this the solemn pomp and preliminaries, the barely-pregnable successive lines of approach which hedge in the sacred person of the Radical-Socialist citizen in a bowler (or derby) hat who represents the French Executive today.

Louis XI's contact with the people, therefore, will introduce no new startling element of "democracy" into the Royal Idea.

Other aspects of his childhood mold his character. His father he rarely sees, for the great adventure of St. Joan has begun, and Charles is in the saddle to win back his dignity and his kingship, and comes rarely now to Bourges. This early lack of acquaintance and understanding between Louis and his father will ripen before long into cold and enduring antagonism. His mother is often absent also, with her husband. The child is removed from Bourges, which has become unsafe, to the strong château-fortress of Loches, where his playmates are children of the townsfolk and the peasantry. His education meanwhile is not neglected. The great Gerson, Chancellor of the University of Paris, transcendent scholar and saint, to whom the *Imitation of Christ* was attributed for centuries,[4] draws up the outline of the Dauphin's curriculum. It is primarily based on the simple, now outmoded, dogma of that age that all men, rich or poor, king or peasant, are equal in the sight of God and His Judgment, and that the end of man's existence is not this earthly life: that strong elemental belief (especially concerning equality before Death) which runs through all the life and letters of the ages of faith, and has inspired strong poetry from St. Bernard, with

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[4] And sometimes is today.

Dic ubi Salomon, olim tam nobilis?
Vel ubi Samson eſt, dux invincibilis?
Vel pulchrior Absalon, vultu mirabilis?
Vel dulcis Jonathas, multum amabilis?

Quo Cæsar abiit, celsus imperio?
Vel Dives splendidus, totus in prandio?
Dic, ubi Tullius, clarus eloquio?
Vel Ariſtoteles, summus ingenio?

[Where now is Solomon, once so noble?—or Samson, the invincible captain?—or the well-favored Absalon in his beauty?—or gentle Jonathan, who was so amiable?

Where is Cæsar gone, the master of the Empire?—whither Dives the splendid, forever at table?—and where is Tully (Cicero), that illustrious orator?—or Aristotle, of the supreme genius?]

(From the "*Rythma de Contemptu Mundi*")

down to Villon's echo of this theme:

Je congnois que povres et riches,
Sages et folz, preſtres et laiz,
Nobles, villains, larges et chiches,
Petis et grans, et beaulx et laiz,
Dames a rebrassez colletz,
De quelconque condicion,
Portans atours et bourreletz,
Mort saisit sans excepcion.

[I know full well that rich and poor,
Villein and noble, high and low,
Laymen and clerks, gracious and dour,
Wise men and foolish, sweet of show,
Or foul of favour, dames that go
Ruffed and rebatoed, great or small,
High-tired or hooded—Death (I know)
Without exception seizes all.]

(PAYNE)

—which theme he repeats in one great ballade and two lesser ones. Nor should there be forgotten among the array of poets who have illuminated this antique theme the sweet Scot Master Dunbar, whom his stiffnecked countrymen ignore, in his long "Lament for the Makars," with its haunting refrain:

> Unto the Death gois all Estatis,
> Princis, Prelatis, and Potestatis,
> Baith rich and poor of all degree:
> *Timor Mortis conturbat me.*

This, then, is the moral foundation of the great Gerson's educational scheme for the Dauphin Louis. The child's tutor is Jehan Majoris, Master of Arts and Licentiate in Canon Law, a superb Latin scholar and logician. For Majoris Louis will always retain one of his rare and sincere affections, and one of his first recorded letters is concerned with a gift for the tutor, now his confessor. Jehan d'Arcouville acts as assistant tutor; and in the matter of books, since the splendid Royal library at the Louvre [5] is in the hands of the English, Charles buys his small son several richly written and illuminated manuscripts. For the most part Louis' schoolbooks are no doubt those common to children—the *Donatus,* the standard grammar of the Middle Ages (Ælius Donatus, *De Octo partibus Orationis*), the *Catonet,* a translation of Cato's moral distichs, the *Opus Tripartitum* of Gerson, a tender, delightful manual for very young children, the *Doctrinal,* the Latin grammar of Alexandre de Villedieu; and preceding these, the A.B.C. and the book of the Seven Penitential Psalms, with regular scriptural and other religious instruction, so that the child may understand and intelligently follow not only the daily celebration of the Mass but the minor Offices of every

[5] Charles V. had established this library in one of the towers of the Louvre. Its furnishings showed the esteem in which literature was held by this King. The walls were paneled with Irish oak, the vault of the roof with cypress. The windows were of stained glass, guarded by trellises of brass wire. Thirty chandeliers and a silver lamp burned there at all hours of the night. The catalogue mentions twelve hundred volumes, the manuscripts for the most part jewels of the Parisian illuminators', scribes', and binders' art—and they were supreme throughout Europe.

day. And with all these he diligently reads the History of France, for history (says the proverb) is the Breviary of Kingship; and the Bailli of Touraine, Guillaume d'Avaugour, instructs him in the use of the sword, the lance, and the bow.

He emerges educated from his tutors' hands. From his letters it may be seen what command he has of clear, crisp, resonant French. His handwriting is bold and sure. He retains some of his classical Latin throughout his life, though the colloquial Latin of some of the letters is most probably his secretaries' work. In 1461, while he is still Dauphin and the guest of Burgundy at Genappe, he pays 30 crowns for a French translation of Xenophon, in eight volumes on parchment, illuminated and bound. His library, though small, is carefully chosen and obviously used. An inventory of the books at his chosen retreat of Plessis-les-Tours was made in 1480. They include this Xenophon; an annotated Lucan; a finely illuminated manucript copy of Livy's History, in Latin, which he seized unfinished from Cardinal Balue after that politician's disgrace and had completed at his own expense; an abridged History of France; a life of Charlemagne, one of Louis' particular heroes; a book called *Traité des Différends,* a treatise on points at issue between France and England; an illuminated volume of genealogies of the Kings of France and the Dukes of Burgundy; the *Sfortiades* of the Italian humanist Francesco Filelfo; five law volumes, a treatise on monarchy, a treatise on birds, and two superb Bibles, now preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale. Louis retains an interest in letters. During his reign the first printing-presses in France begin creaking. And (which is his great practical benefaction to letters) he will presently release the scoundrel Villon from his well-deserved prison, and thereby set him to pouring out his ripened genius in some of the world's highest song.

. . . And now, being educated, Louis is to be married. He is entering his fourteenth year, a keen-eyed unhandsome boy with the long aquiline nose inherited from his father, a willful chin, a mop of thick hair, cut circularly;[6] and his bride is long since chosen. His father has arranged the marriage for a practical and immediate purpose, and to re-cement an ancient alliance. Louis will receive his young bride with boyish indifference, rapidly merging into cold and active hatred. Her name is Margaret Stuart, daughter of James I of Scotland—of the unfortunate Royal Stuarts, the House of Defeat.

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[6] There is a portrait at Arras.

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THE TIRED HEART

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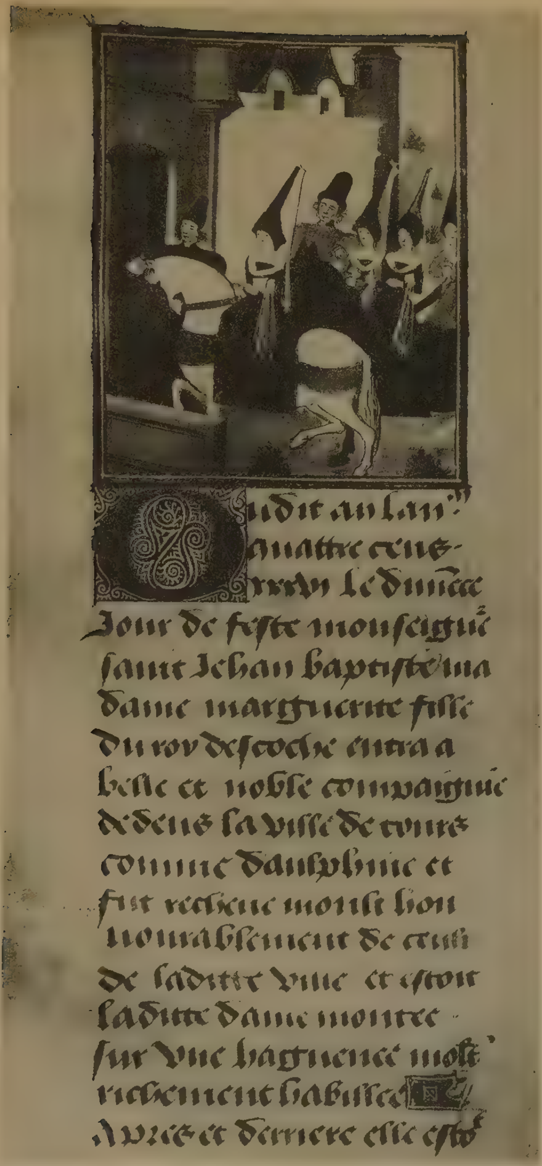
§ 1

"Marti'mas wind, when wilt thou blaw
And shake the green leaves off the tree?
O gentle Death, when wilt thou come?
For of my life I am wearie."

Voltaire, in his *Histoire Générale,* has this passage on the House of Stuart: "There is no other example in history of a House so continuously unfortunate. The first of the Kings of Scotland who bore the name James, after having been held a prisoner for eighteen years in England, was assassinated, with his wife, by the hands of his subjects. James II, his son, was killed at the age of twenty-nine, fighting against the English. James III, having been thrust into prison by his people, was killed in battle by insurgents. James IV perished in a losing combat. Mary Stuart, his granddaughter, thrust from her throne and a fugitive in England, after languishing eighteen years in prison was condemned to death by English judges and beheaded. Charles I, her grandson, King of Scotland and England, was sold by the Scots, condemned to death by the English, and died on the public scaffold. James, his son, seventh of the name and second of England, was expelled from his three kingdoms, and, to add to his misfortune, his son's legitimacy was



udit an lan
quatre cens
xxxvi le dimẽce
Jour de feſte monſeigñr
ſaint Jehan baptiſte ma
dame marguerite fille
du roy deſcoce entra a
belle et noble compaignie
dedens la ville de tours
comme daulphine et
fut receue moult hon
nourablement de ceulx
de laditte ville et eſtoit
laditte dame montee
ſur une haguenee moult
richement habillee
Avāt et derriere elle eſto

THE ENTRY OF MARGARET OF SCOTLAND INTO TOURS,
JUNE 24TH, 1436
From a manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

called in question. This son endeavored to step back on the throne of his fathers, only to see his friends perish by the executioner's hand; and we have seen the Prince Charles Edward, combining in vain the virtues of his ancestors and the courage of King John Sobieski, his maternal grandfather, essay exploits and suffer ill-fortune of the most unbelievable kind. If anything can justify those who believe in a fatality which nothing can turn aside, it is this consistent sequence of evil-fortune which has persecuted the House of Stuart for more than three hundred years."

It is true. In contemplating the history of this House one can hear far-off dirges and faint Æschylean choruses of doom. Nor has misfortune struck at the heads of the House alone. It was the fate of James the First's daughter, one year before his assassination, to sail to France; to be married, a child of thirteen, to the Dauphin Louis; to live a brief life whose early sunshine was gradually obscured by gathering thunderclouds; to be the object of the romantic worship of poets and the enmity of a husband; and at last, amid the clacking of poisoned tongues and the espionage of Louis' familiars, to die a girl of twenty-one with a last bitter speech, the bitterest one could wish to hear: *"Fy de la vie de ce monde, et ne m'en parlez plus, et plus qu'autre chose m'ennuie"*—"Fie on the life of this world!—speak to me no more of it, for more than any other thing it wearies me."

On a March day in 1436 a tall *nef,* newly built in Spain and very swift, under the command of Master Pierre Chepye, stood out from Dumbarton down the Clyde with a fair following wind. On board was the Princess Margaret of Scotland, escorted by William Sinclair, Earl of Orkney and Admiral of Scotland, the Bishop of Brechin, Sir Walter Ogilvy, Treasurer to the King, Sir John Maxwell of Calderwood, and a dozen others of the first notables of Scotland, together with a hundred well-born youths in fine new livery. The rest of the convoy, eleven ships and galleys, carried twelve hundred Scottish men-at-arms. After a delay due to a change of wind the ships set out again from a west-coast Scottish harbor and bent sail for France. Off the coast of Finisterre an English fleet lay in wait with orders to kidnap the Princess, an unexpired truce of 1431 between England and the Scots notwithstanding; but before the Princess' convoy was sighted a squadron of Flemish merchantmen laden with wine from La Rochelle bore into view, and the English at once gave chase and captured the prize, which a Spanish fleet took from them next day. Meanwhile the Scottish convoy slipped past in safety, and on April 17 anchored off La Rochelle. The little Princess was landed and escorted to the Priory of Nieul-sur-Mer, where Reginald de Chartres, Archbishop of Rheims and Chancellor of France, Monseigneur de Graville, and a steward of the Royal Household received her as the guest of France.

The voyage had been undertaken only after prolonged dallying. The ancient alliance between France and Scotland, which some romantic Scots trace back to the time of Charlemagne,[1] had been recently quickened by the timely help sent to the Dauphin Charles in 1420 and 1421, when the Earls of Buchan and Douglas and John Stuart of Darnley brought over forces of nearly 16,000 men and helped to defeat the English at Baugé in 1421. But at Verneuil in 1424 there was friction between the allies, and the result was the death in action of Buchan, with half a dozen more Scottish captains, and the decimation of the Scottish force. The Battle of the Herrings in 1429 was another disaster for the Scots. Meanwhile Charles VII, raising the necessary sum from moneylenders, sent another embassy to Scotland, headed by the Archbishop of Rheims and including Master Alain Chartier, Chancellor of Bayeux, diplomat, "the Seneca of France," dullest of didactic poets. The Latin speech of Master Chartier on this occasion has been preserved. It is stuffed with pedantry, rhetoric, and pomposities, Biblical texts and classical tags. "This friendship," cries Master Chartier in an exalted moment, speaking of the Franco-Scottish alliance, "—what could be more durable, handed down as it is through the generations like a perpetual covenant? For it is not written with ink on sheepskin, but with mingled blood on the flesh of men!" One may imagine the granite-like Scots visages, impassive under the harangue, betraying no flicker of response to the rising emotion and expanding gestures of the foreigner. Even today actors fear the audiences of Glasgow.

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[1] Relying chiefly on a passage in Eginhard's life of Charlemagne which says that the kings of Scotland (that is, at that period, of Ireland, *Scottia*) were so devoted to Charlemagne that they called him nothing but their lord, and themselves his subjects and vassals (*ut eum nunquam aliter nisi dominum seque subditos et servos ejus pronuntiarent*—Eginhard, *Vita Karoli Magni Imperatoris, XVI*). Eginhard adds that they sent Charlemagne letters to this effect, which were preserved in his time in the chancellery. But Charlemagne died in A. D. 814, and the first non-apocryphal ruler of Scotland is Kenneth MacAlpin, 832-860. Most likely Eginhard was thinking of Eardulf King of Northumbria, who sought the help of the Pope and of Charlemagne on being thrust from his kingdom in 808, and possibly of Offa King of Mercia, a strong ally of Charlemagne, with whom he exchanged correspondence.

This embassy brought about a marriage treaty between the Princess Margaret and the Dauphin Louis, reasonable grounds for the military help which was Charles' chief pre-occupation. It is to this embassy, it would appear, that the pretty legend attaches concerning Master Alain Chartier discovered sleeping on a bench in the sunshine, and the Scottish Princess who kissed the poet's lips as he lay, "on account of all the good words which had issued therefrom." Alas, that such a dainty thing should be apocryphal! The Princess was four years old at the time.

The marriage treaty was ratified finally in October 1428.

Margaret's dowry was 15,000 livres, and in exchange for a fighting force of 6000 men the King of Scots was to be awarded the county of Saintonge. But in the meantime Almighty God saw fit to deliver France by the hand of a Maiden Warrior; and before the blaze of glory surrounding St. Joan the Scottish treaty lapsed into the shade. Charles VII, flushed with victory, had no need of the Scots, and was in no great haste to hand over Saintonge. Moreover the Scottish troops in France, their stout behavior at Baugé and elsewhere notwithstanding, do not seem to have been violently beloved by their hosts, who have ever found it difficult to endure foreigners. The lank, solemn, lantern-jawed Sawney, then as afterwards, was inclined to justify age-long gibes about oats and poverty by enormous eating and drinking away from home. This is admitted even by the patriotic compiler of the Book of Pluscarden.[2] "They were called by the French," he records, "devourers of mutton, tosspots, and wine-bibbers"—"*muttonum commestores et vini consumptores et hausores.*" In Bower's *Scotochronicon* the charge is more succinct: "wine-skins and sheepstealers." And in the archives of the city of Tours there is a message from the authorities to Charles VII in 1433-44 complaining bitterly of '*les tirannies et orribles maulx que avoient fait et faisoient les Escossois et autres gens d'armes logés aux environs de Tours au pauvre peuple de la ville, et aux habitants des campagnes.*" (The tyrannies and horrible wrongs which the Scots and other men-at-arms stationed in the Tours district had inflicted and were inflicting on the poor of the town and the country people round about.)

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[2] The Book of Pluscarden (*Liber Pluscardensis*), a Latin chronicle compiled for the Benedictine Abbot of Dunfermline by an anonymous cleric, whom Mr. Felix Skene (Edinburgh, 1877) identifies tentatively with Maurice Buchanan, Treasurer to the Princess. The date of the Book is probably 1461, and its more original passages are important. The compiler was a frequent eyewitness, in continued contact with the Princess in France, and knew St. Joan.

James I, for his part, was none too impatient to expose his child to the perils of a sea-voyage; nor, possibly, to pay over her dowry. Moreover, he was between 1428 and 1431 engaged in smoothing out his own difficult position at home by negotiations with the English. It was in 1433 that Garter King-at-Arms brought these to a head by a mission to Scotland to propose a permanent peace, the cession to Scotland of the bitterly-contested "key" towns of Berwick and Roxburgh, and the marriage of the Princess Margaret to the young king Henry VI. The tempting and dangerous offer stung Charles VII to action. An embassy was despatched post-haste to Scotland to remind James of his obligations. He replied by a request that his dear brother of France should state his exact intentions; and on November 14th Messire Regnault Girard, Master of the Household, Master Hugh Kennedy, the Scottish companion-in-arms of St. Joan, and Master Aymery Martineau, Licentiate and Master of Requests, crossed to Scotland to make the final arrangements.

Girard has left behind him a manuscript account of this terrible crossing. A furious storm, *grande et merveilleuse tormente,* swept down on the envoys off the Scilly isles and drove them to the open sea, a hundred miles beyond the Irish coast. After five days the gale abated sufficiently to allow their ship, the *Marie,* to tack and attempt to get back on her former course. Off the extreme western coast of Ireland the gale blew up fiercely again, and after another five days, the ship having suffered some damage, although hove-to in the shelter of a high rock, her master decided to run for it along the coast. On the second of December they sighted habitable land and entered the Race of Kintyre (*le rax de Cantier*), between Ireland and the Scottish Isles; and at last, after a further month's delay (for which Girard does not account) the travelers came to anchor in the harbor of "Lococen"—possibly Port Logan—

on the 8th of January, after fifty-six days of sea-perils. "We had much to suffer," says Girard, not untruly; and on landing their first preoccupation, as was customary in that age, was to make a pilgrimage to the famous shrine of St. Ninian at Whithorn, where in fulfillment of their vow in time of danger they presented a silver *nef* bearing the King's arms engraved.

Negotiations were still to drag on for some months concerning details of the Princess's passage, the apportionment of the expenses, the question of the Princess's establishment, the provision of ships, and what not. On the Monday before Lent, 1434, Kennedy and Martineau returned to France bearing final articles for Charles' acceptance. He demurred to one only. James had asked that his daughter, after her marriage, might have a separate establishment until she was of an age for the marriage to be consummated. Charles replied very properly that her place was with the Queen (*"et ne luy semble chose honneste ou convenable que elle demourast ailleurs fors avecques la Royne"*).

And so at length, on September 12th, the ships arrived from France, and after final dilatoriness, this time on the part of James, and due partly to financial objections and partly to the feelings of a father—he contended that the expenses of the ships' stay in Scotland should be borne by his brother of France, that the weather was too bad to allow the Princess to undertake a rough sea journey, and that the discipline of the Church forbade marriages in Advent—the child at length embarked. The parting with her father was affecting. James was overcome with emotion. "He stayed not long," says Girard, "but left in a flood of tears."

That day, March 27th, 1436, the convoy sailed.

§ 2

The progress of the little bride-to-be from La Rochelle to

Tours for the wedding was leisurely and exciting. The King sent her an escort of noble ladies. A procession of notables and clergy met her at Poitiers, a child dressed as an angel was lowered from the city gate to crown her with flowers, the inhabitants presented her with a service of plate. At the other towns on her way—Niort, St. Maixent, Lusignan—she was received with grave honors. She entered Tours on the 24th of June, attended by her ladies, with two noblemen leading her palfrey, and went straight to the Cathedral of St. Gatien to say her prayers. Bands of musicians and the fresh voices of children singing in her welcome greeted her as she traversed the streets. She went on to the palace, which Charles VII and his wife Marie of Anjou had done their best to prepare for her coming by once more borrowing cloth-of-gold and tapestry hangings from the officers of the Duke of Orleans. The Queen embraced and kissed her in the great hall. The boy Dauphin entered with his train, and the two children gravely embraced; and after doing formal homage together to the Queen they were taken by her into her own apartments, where, says the chronicler Chartier, they amused themselves till supper-time.

Next day, in the chapel of the Château, the children were married by the Archbishop of Rheims. The Dauphin wore blue velvet, embroidered with gold leaves, and carried a sword sent him by the King of Scotland; a famous ancient sword said to have belonged to the *"roy d'Escosse qui fust fort hardy"*—probably Robert Bruce. Its pommel bore the figures of Our Lady and St. Michael. The Princess wore a robe of velvet and cloth of gold, with a little diadem on her head, and a long royal mantle. As the ceremony was about to begin Charles VII appeared in the chapel, booted, spurred, wearing a gray riding-suit. He had ridden in from Amboise and had not had time to change.

A banquet with music followed, during which an interlude was presented by a band of Morris dancers, with costumes hastily and economically contrived. The Court of France was still living in genteel poverty, and the municipal accounts of Tours give some significant "production" details of this performance. I transcribe these:

> To Richard Gaugain for four old bedsheets, to make three costumes for those who danced the Morris before my said Lady. . . . XV sols.
>
> To Jehan Avisart, tailor, for cutting, making, and sewing the said costumes. . . . XV sols.
>
> To Denis le Vitrier, painter, for hastily and richly painting the said costumes, and four beards for the said dancers. . . . LX sols.
>
> To Gervaise Lechanteur for 27 dozen bells for the said dancers and the labor. . . . XXX sols.
>
> To two women for plucking the flowers to make hats for the said dancers. . . . II sols, VI deniers.
>
> To Master Robert le Deable, one of the said dancers, for his trouble, and for directing the said dance, together with the costumes and painting; and for a pair of hose which (he says) he split during the said dance. . . . XXX sols.

It is good, homely, rustic entertainment; and the rhythmic jigging of the Morris to its bells, pipe, and tabor brings this day at Tours and our own time suddenly very close together, for was it not only a dozen years ago that Mr. E. V. Lucas saw, in an Oxfordshire kitchen, the Morris performed by two old men, survivors of the last team of the traditional old Morris-dancers of England? As for Master Robert le Deable, who split his hose in the artistic fury of his capering, I like to think that he has long ago in the Happy Fields met Master William Kemp, the Elizabethan actor, whose epic nine-days' Morris-dance from London to Norwich Master Kemp has himself described, day by day, in a pamphlet which is one of the most delightful artless things in the language.[3]

[3] "Kemps Nine Daies Wonder," London, 1600. (Bodleian Library, Art. 4°L62.)

After these mild festivities, since the bridal pair were not canonically of age to consummate their marriage, for which a dispensation had been obtained from the Archbishop of Tours, the Princess retired with the Queen to her apartments, the Dauphin to his own house, then allotted him, with his tutor Bernard d'Armagnac, Comte de la Marche. The Scots lords and ladies who accompanied the Princess were politely dismissed with presents—for dismissal it seemed. They returned to Scotland, says De Cagny, none too well pleased. Out of the retinue sent over by James I only some dozen remained: a noble and his wife whose name Girard gives obscurely as "Othart," Jane Wemyss, Ysabel Abernethy, and a few others. And it is interesting to note that in the year 1530 the Scots were still claiming Saintonge. They never got it.

For the next twelve months the Dauphine, while her young husband is away riding with his father on that progress through Auvergne, Dauphiny, and Languedoc which is to open his eyes to the extent of his heritage and the work before him, lives an uneventful round in the quiet household of Marie of Anjou. Day follows day without variation, like the steady drip of soft rain. The day begins with the Queen's Mass, said by her chaplain, and her offering; after which come household duties, the reading of the Psalms at the canonical hours, meals, and periods of leisure, during which one of the ladies reads aloud while the Queen and the others occupy themselves with needlework. At such hours, it would seem from the household accounts, the nibbling of rose-sugar, preserves, comfits, or nuts enables the fair assembly (as in our modern theater) to concentrate more equably on the pleasures of the mind. The reading is from the poems of Christine de Pisan or Alain Chartier, or from some chronicle, romance, collection of tales, devotional work, or manual of deportment; and on this last one may be permitted to linger a moment, since the most popular medieval manual of this kind, written by Geoffroy, Chevalier de la Tour Landry, may still be consulted with profit. It was a handbook for the maiden of birth over half Europe during the Middle Ages. Caxton published a translation of it; another, written in the reign of Henry VI, exists in manuscript in the British Museum.[4] It was composed by La Tour Landry for his three daughters about the year 1372, and is characterized by parental affection, sound sense, and that bracing absence of prudery which Rémy de Gourmont has so praised at the expense of our own *civilisation anglicane et bourgeoise.*

The Chevalier opens his treatise with one of those garden-scenes, full of bird-songs and quiet breathing, which his age loved. "In the year of the incarnacion of oure Lord MIIJ^{c}LXXJ" —I quote from the British Museum MS.—"as I was in a garden, al hevi and full of thought, in the shadow, about the ende of the monthe of Aprille. . . ." The Chevalier is suddenly rejoiced by the note of the thrush and a throng of other birds. His thoughts turn to his dead wife, who has been taken from him twenty years, and thence to his daughters, and he ponders on their youth, and how he may instruct them best in all lovely virtues. And so this book follows. The Chevalier's daughters are instructed to cultivate piety, charity, modesty of demeanor, chastity, obedience, temperance, and courtesy—which last is (their father says truly) a lovely virtue, pleasing alike to God and man; as a poet of this later age has well sung:

Of Courtesy, it is much less
Than Courage of Heart or Holiness,
Yet in my walks it seems to me
That the Grace of God is in Courtesy.

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[4] "The Book of the Chevalier de la Tour Landry." Early English Text Society. 1868, ed. Thos. Wright.

They are warned against pride, malicious gossip, overdress, jealousy, bad temper, chattering at Mass, and painting their faces. "Putte no things," says the Chevalier—I again quote the British Museum MS.—"putte no thinge to poppe, painte, and faire youre uisages. . . . Plucke no browes, nother temples, nor forhed." And they are to wash their hair with no cunning dyes or washes, but with plain honest lye and water. In eating and drinking they are to be delicate, for over-indulgence in wine troubles the wit, the memory, and the understanding, and (what is hardly less terrifying to a woman) "makith red eyen and feble . . . the uisage flemed red and fulle of white whelkes, and makith the hondes to tremble and to quake." And the Chevalier adds, some six centuries in advance of the Cocktail Age, that of all evils besetting a woman "dronkynnesse is the worste, for whan she is dronke she is disposed to alle manere of vnclennesse and vices."

The gentlewoman will preserve her poise constantly, especially at church, and will not twist her neck, like the crane and the tortoise, in looking over her shoulder. She will hold her head steady, like a bloodhound; if she wishes to look aside she will turn her head and body together, "and so youre countenance shal be most ferme and sure." Most medieval manuals of deportment are explicit on this point. The contemporary anonymous bourgeois of Paris, who composed such a fascinating treatise for his young wife, embracing all domestic subjects from confession to cookery,[5] is stricter. At church, he says, the modest woman will choose a solitary place before some fair altar or image, and there "hold your head upright, and keep your lips ever moving, saying orisons and prayers. Moreover, keep your glance continually on your book, or on the face of the image, without looking at man or woman, picture or aught else, and without hypocrisy or feint keep your thoughts always on Heaven, and pray with your whole heart." On the general carriage of the head, also, the Bourgeois is more insistent than the Chevalier. Roving eyes (says the Bourgeois) and a head horribly reared up, like a lion, the neck stretched forth like a stag in flight or a runaway horse—all these are detestable in a modest woman. But this is for the middle class.

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[5] *"Le Ménagier de Paris,"* c. 1393: Paris, 1846, La Société des Bibliophiles Français: ed. Jérôme Pichon.

The Chevalier supplies many chapters of sound moral advice, conveyed by stories and by Scriptural examples of foolish or sinful women (Eve, Lot's wife, the daughters of Noë, Moab, and Midian, Delila, Jezebel, Herodias), and of good and shining women (Our Lady, Sara, Rachel, Rebecca, Ruth, Susanna, Deborah, St. Radegonde). The cautionary tale of Perrot Luard and his wife, who misconducted themselves in a chapel of the church of Beaulieu, has evoked outraged squealing from those *jocrisses* to whom the untroubled Catholic frankness of the Middle Ages is shocking. J. K. Huysmans and Rémy de Gourmont have sufficiently dealt with such ninnies. The Chevalier de La Tour Landry, in calmly relating such a story for the benefit of his virtuous (but not prudish) daughters, is in honorable company: that of St. Bernard, St. Vincent Ferrier, the terrible Odo of Cluny, St. Gregory the Great, and Clement of Alexandria, who (to the confusion of all prigs and puritans) summed up the whole question in one lapidary phrase: "Why should I be ashamed to name here what God has not been ashamed to create?" The medievals called things by their names. Hot ears and hypocrisy of this sexual kind are among the many baser legacies of the Reform.

We may dismiss the Chevalier, after briefly contemplating one or two passages in his book which strike most oddly on fashionable modern ears. Here is one concerning fasting:

"And affter, my faire doughtres, ye aught to fast, as long as ye be to wedde, iij dayes a woke (week), for to holde lowe youre flesshe, to kepe you chaste and clene in Goddes service."

And here is one fragment more, presenting the medieval theory that little pet dogs are less deserving of care than starving Christians:

"And at one time a friar told her roundly that it was not well done that her dogs should be sleek and fat while God's poor went empty and thin with hunger."

Such were the superstitions of the age.

§ 3

So the quiet days pass in the house of Marie of Anjou, and the little Northern Princess, possessing no doubt the romantic sensibility and temperament of her nation (she loves poetry, as we shall see), learns from the book of the Chevalier and other manuals of devotion and morals, the whole duty of a Christian gentlewoman.

It was at the beginning of July 1437 that the Dauphin, having received his "blooding" in war like a neophyte at his first foxhunt, joined the Court at Gien-sur-Loire. The Dauphine awaited him; and, says the Book of Pluscarden, "their marriage was there perfectly consummated, in the name of Christ Jesus." Louis seems to have held no communication with his bride during his absence. He had had a horse to ride, homage to receive, men-at-arms to command, and fighting, more exciting occupations than writing letters to women. His father, who seems to have had some sincere affection for his little daughter-in-law—he had been *moult joyeux et content* when he saw Margaret on her wedding-day—had sent her a pretty

New Year gift, a gold-framed standing mirror, garnished with pearls.

Now she is a woman, and her unhappiness has begun; for it is obvious that Louis begins to hate his wife immediately. It cannot have been from any lack of personal attraction on her part, for she seems to have been fair. "A very lovely face," says the (Scots) compiler of the Book of Pluscarden, who knew her intimately,—*"facie venusta valde."* "Beautiful and well-shaped," says the Frenchman Mathieu d'Escouchy, on the authority of eyewitnesses. *"Excellentement belle et prudente dame,"* says another contemporary. Commynes, Louis' friend, puts her misfortune laconically; "He (Louis) was married to a daughter of Scotland, to his distaste; and as long as she lived he regretted it." It was left to the English historian Hall, who loathed the Scots, to suggest (without a shred of evidence) that the Dauphin's hatred of his wife was due to her "evil-savoured breath." More probably, as P. Champion observes, the root of the trouble may be traced to Louis' being forced to marry at his father's order: for his feelings towards his father are already plain.

They set up their joint establishment, very soon, no doubt to Margaret's regret, for she had been happy and beloved by the King and Queen; and before long she had begun to take refuge from the coldness of her husband in rhyme. She was the delicate daughter of a poet, the author of "The King's Quair." James the First's "Spring-Song of the Birds," beginning:

> *Worschippe ye that loveris bene this May*
> *For of your blisse the Kalendis are begonne . . .*

has been considered respectable enough to be included in the Oxford Book of English Verse. His "Good Counsel," with its refrain:

Keep thy behest unto thy God and man,
And for ilk inch he will thee quit a span

adorns a more recent anthology. Something of his bent for rhyming Margaret inherited; and at this period rhyming was the fashion. Young bloods and lovelorn blades about the Court could reel you off a half-dozen rondeaux for the asking. The form was not difficult, the subject was inflexibly Love, and a man of fashion could easily attain a very pretty proficiency between the hours of hunting and sword-exercise. The accepted models were Charles Duke of Orleans and his predecessor Alain Chartier; for Villon's blazing sun had not yet arisen, and in any case his Muse was never a Court personage. Dames of honor wrote indefatigably, as well as gentlemen; and we know from subsequent evidence, as her melancholy story unfolds, that the Dauphine Margaret herself composed as industriously as any, sometimes scribbling far through the night into the dawn. No single line of verse has survived the destruction to which her somber husband consigned every scrap of her papers after her death.

There was a gallant literary set surrounding Margaret, and to one of its members at least we owe verse directly celebrating her. "Her for whose sake I wear the 'M'," sings the young Vicomte de Blosseville:

Celle pour qui je porte l'M
Je vous asseure que je l'ame
Tant fort qu'a peu que n'en desvye
Ne jamaiz d'aultre amer envye
N'auray, ne que de rendre l'ame.

Je l'ay choysie pour ma Dame,
Dont je ne crains reprouche d'ame,
Car de tous biens est assouvye
Celle pour qui je porte l'M.

There is no doubt to whom the "M" refers, in this formal declaration of romantic adoration in the fashion of the day. No deductions can be made from such a declaration. It was an essential part of the *amour courtois* then in vogue; and as we shall see, Margaret will swear on her dying bed a most solemn repeated oath that she had never been unfaithful in her life.

The best of the noble rhymers round her was Jehan d'Estouteville, of the great Norman family, a gallant soldier and a poet who has received the honor of having a ballade of his mistaken for one of the minor works of Villon. Among her ladies, some of whom were bluestockings, Jehanne Filleul stands out for the reason that one of her rondeaux has been preserved. It is a love-lament of the kind common to the period, and as good verse as any maid of honor has ever made.

Hélas! mon amy, sur mon ame
Plus qu'aultre famme
J'ay de douleur si largement
Que nullement
Avoir confort je ne puis d'ame.

J'ay tant de dueil en ma pensée . . .

Thin piping enough, compared with the learned and mystical song to be poured out a century later by the ladies of the Lyons School, with Louise Labé at their head: the gallant Louise who, accoutred like a man, *le Capitaine Loys,* rode to the wars and is believed to have fought at the siege of Perpignan. The verse of the Dauphine was probably on the same level as that of her maids of honor; and one can see the sneer twisting Louis' features as he glances at her manuscript before throwing it into the fire. There must have been a great deal of manuscript. At the official inquiry held after her death her enemy and calumniator Jamet de Tillay, to whom we shall come very soon, is asked to give his opinion concerning the long listless malady which preceded a fatal chill:

> The King asked him whence this malady proceeded. He answered that it came from lack of rest, according to the doctors, and that she sat up so far into the night, at some times later than at others, that sometimes it was almost sunrise before she retired to bed, and sometimes my Lord the Dauphin had been to sleep once or twice before she came, and that she would often apply herself to composing rondeaux, often as many as twelve in a day.[6]

A more poisonous hint we may leave for the moment. Jamet de Tillay adds to the above that he had heard that the Dauphine's ladies, and especially Prégente de Melun, Jehanne Filleule, and Marguerite de Salignac, were to blame in encouraging their mistress in this. No high personage addicted to letters ("wielding the pen," as Scott said of Byron, "with the easy negligence of a nobleman") has ever lacked encouraging critics. One sees the pretty head bent over the manuscript, the tall candles guttering, the pale dawn glimmering through the Gothic window; and one may hear the malevolent grunt from the huge bed as the Princess enters the marital chamber and draws the curtains, and see her cold *moue* of disdain. Nor is one left altogether void of a fleeting sympathy for the Philistine.

Margaret's life has some few other bright specks besides poetry in it. There is a charming picture of the Queen and Court going Maying on May Day 1444, when they rode out into the fields from Montils-les-Tours, a brilliant laughing company. Margaret rode with the Queen. There were jousts and dances in that year and the next. A manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale, deciphered by Vallet de Viriville, gives the program[7] of a Court ball at Châlons in 1445, in which the

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[6] Evidence of Jamet de Tillay, qu. Duclos.
[7] Qu. Barbé.

Dauphine took part. There was first a *Basse Danse de Bourgogne,* a slow graceful square dance for four women and two men, full of low curtsies (*congiés*), bows, and gliding steps, thus set out in the manuscript:

> Three single steps; five double; three single to the right; three return; one curtsey (or bow). Three singles; one double; three singles to the right; three return; one curtsey (or bow).

There followed single dances by Isabella of Lorraine, wife of René King of Anjou and Sicily, by the Duke of Bourbon, by his daughter, wife of the Duke of Calabria, and then, the fifth, by the Dauphine Margaret:

> *Dance of Madame la Dauphine.*
>
> Three double steps; two double doubles; three short steps backward; two *levées;* four single steps; three leaps; two curtsies.

The imagination may justly supply a glitter of wax-lights; soft, on the whole rather melancholy, florid [8] music, played by liveried Court musicians on the lute, the rebeck and cithole, rote, ribible, and clokard—all stringed—with the *vielle,* or stringed hurdygurdy, something like the Balkan *guzlak,* and perhaps the harp and psaltery and a portable organ to hearten the melody; with all this a blaze of brilliant costume and jewels, perfumes, a buzz of light gay talk and laughter, the whole set against a dark hall of high French-Gothic, hung with rich colored tapestries. A fair girl of princely rank might very well forget her miseries awhile in such an evening.

Margaret was sincerely loved by the Queen; and the Duchess of Burgundy, who had come to Court on a diplomatic mission in the same year, was her friend. All three women had their private unhappiness. Charles VII was under the spell of Agnes

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[8] Probably still of the academic type of the School of Cambray, the important center of XVth century music. There was now already transition, but it may not yet have arrived at Court.

Sorel; Burgundy's infidelities were notorious; Margaret was neglected and hated by her husband. There seems no doubt that in addition to Jamet de Tillay Louis had other spies employed, according to his lifelong habit.

The figure of Jamet de Tillay, Bailiff of Vermandois, the Iago of this drama, is sufficiently villainous. He is Louis' familiar and counsellor, a small Breton noble, *petit seigneur,* of middle-age, a tattling scandalmonger, a born spy, a scoffer at religion. Two years before her death Margaret, who had divined the nature and employment of the man, confides to two of her ladies that she hates him more than any man in the world, and that he is stirring up trouble between her and the Dauphin. She repeats this many times, adding on one occasion that de Tillay has said of her the worst things that could be said of any woman. He is perpetually eavesdropping, carrying tales to his master, treading soft-footed about the house, taking insolent liberties. At the inquiry it is made abundantly evident, through the tangle of de Tillay's denials and prevarications, that he has a natural talent for creating mischief, and that he is the agent of another. Thus while the Court is at Nancy, towards the Christmas of 1445, Jamet de Tillay, coming from the King's apartments, meets the Dauphine's Master of the Household, Regnault de Dresnay, and saying "Let us join the ladies"—*"Allons veoir les dames,"* with him enters the Dauphine's apartment. A blazing log-fire burns on the hearth. There are no other lights. Margaret, reclining on a divan, with some of her ladies, is talking. Two gentlemen are also present. Jamet de Tillay, holding up the wax-candle he has brought with him and peering sharp-eyed, sees that one of the gentlemen, leaning with an elbow on the divan, is Jehan d'Estouteville. The other he does not recognize. Jamet and de Dresnay retire, and the virtuous Jamet is filled with indignation.

> Retiring from the said apartment, he said to Messire Regnault that it was great impropriety on his part, being Master of the Household and seeing that they were away from home, not to provide torches or candles in the said apartment.

This is from the Master of the Household's evidence. Jamet adds later, according to de Dresnay, that Madame la Dauphine has been put to shame by him, and that her conduct is that of a wanton. This Jamet, at the inquiry, flatly denies having said.

A further incident, occurring when the Court is at Sarry, near Châlons. Jamet de Tillay, jesting one evening with two of Margaret's maids of honor, sees her elderly lady-in-waiting, Jehanne de Tucé, pass on her way to Vespers.

"Where are you going, old woman?" he calls out.

Madame de Tucé answers tartly, "Not to fetch you; you haven't much to do with Vespers, or any other sort of devotion!" She passes on. A moment later the Dauphine appears, sees Jamet, stops, and turns back. Madame de Tucé hastily follows her, and the Dauphine asks what the "worthy man" has been saying. Her lady answers that he was only jesting, and has said nothing reprehensible. "He says quite sufficient as it is," Margaret comments bitterly.

There is another tale to be carried to Louis very soon. At a joust at Châlons one of the young gentlemen distinguishes himself. The Dauphine, learning that he is poor, impulsively makes him a present, in secret, of some six hundred crowns. It is the custom of great ladies to bestow gifts on valiant sparks, innocently enough; but instantly around this unfortunate Dauphine curious tongues begin wagging, necks craning, and ears flapping. The young man's name, wormed from the Dauphine's maids, is discovered to be Charles Morillon. Such a precious morsel of scandal is conveyed to the Dauphin without fail.

We may consider one final piece of evidence of the painstaking manner in which Jamet de Tillay works off his hate. It occurs to him that to bring about an estrangement between the Dauphine and the Queen would be a good stroke. This he attempts, and achieves, or so it seems. Charles VII has casually observed to him that when the Court leaves Châlons the accommodation along the road for a part of the journey may be so scanty that the Queen and the Dauphine may possibly have to travel part of the way by different roads. De Tillay informs the Queen that the King has decided to travel by stages of ten to twelve leagues. The Queen questions him further, and at length gathers from him vaguely that the King means that she and Margaret must travel separately. The Dauphine, he points out, will have a large company and much luggage. The Queen, resigned to her present situation (she knows that Agnes Sorel is in the offing) consents to this arrangement; for she is devout and obedient. She finds later from her own Master of the Household that no such instructions have been issued, and that the threatened indignity exists only in the imagination of Jamet de Tillay. But the poison has been spilled; and not without effect.

The Dauphine, so listless and unhappy, but to the world *très-joyeuse,* will never set out on this journey. On Saturday, August 7, 1445, Charles VII, before starting, makes a pilgrimage to the great church of Our Lady of the Thorn at Châlons, where the Perpetual Virginity of the Mother of God is honored, as in the line of Chaucer, under the symbol of the ever-burning thorn-bush of Scripture:

"O bush unburnt, burning in Moses' sight!"

Margaret accompanies him. It is a blazing day, and she is not of a strong constitution. Indeed, if the barbed tongue of Jamet de Tillay is to be credited at all, she has wantonly sacrificed her health to a slim figure, to that end drinking vinegar, eating sour apples, and sometimes lacing her corsage too tightly. (It is one of the sincere griefs of the pious Jamet that the Dauphine is childless.) She enters the church with the King, says her prayers at the shrine of Notre Dame de l'Epine, issues forth into the tropical sunshine, and returns, very hot and sweating, to her lodging, the house of the Bishop of Châlons, an old palace of thick stone, icy cold alike in winter and summer. Here, resting from the heat, *toute suant,* she impatiently strips off her outer clothing and remains seated for some time in her petticoat. Next day she is prostrate with a severe chill, coughing and feverish. She is removed at once to a better lodging in the Cloister of St. Stephen, and all the bells of Châlons are stilled by the royal command. Master Guillaume Leothier, the Dauphin's physician, examines the patient and diagnoses lung trouble. Excessive vigils, he adds—note how this eternally pursues the unfortunate girl—have weakened her and concentrated corrupt humors in her brain, transmitted thence to her lungs.

This is an immediate cue for the ever-lurking de Tillay. He too discusses the malady. He has already reported the nightly poetic vigils to the King. ("Does writing verse," asks Charles innocently, "give one a headache?" And Jehan Bureau, his treasurer, then present, assures the King that it certainly does if one is too addicted to it, but that otherwise it is but a toy—*"ce sont choses de plaisance"*). Now Jamet goes further, and drops the poison of which I have already spoken. To Marie de l'Espine, waiting-woman to the Queen, he alleges outright that the Dauphine is lovesick—*malade d'amour*. To Nicole Chambre, another member of the Household, who has suggested to him that the Dauphine's despondent fits might be attributed to "something on her heart," Jamet replies "Most certainly"; and a moment later exudes his hate. *"Ce sont amours,"* he adds. ("It is a love-affair.") At the inquiry, confronted with these witnesses, he loses his head and pretends that he cannot remember having uttered these calumnies: brought face to face with Nicole Chambre, he makes no recorded reply.

So the sick girl lies, staring into vacancy and brooding. She sees only the doctor and her own women, for it seems that rigid Court etiquette keeps the King and Queen away. The rule was strict and general, and founded no doubt on the fear of infection. As for the Dauphin, he is hardly likely to be present. She lies there, absorbed in her thoughts, and to her elderly lady-in-waiting, Madame de Tucé, who gently rebukes her for giving way to melancholy, she answers bitterly that she has good reason, for her life has been poisoned by slanderers. A day or two later, in a sudden outburst, she reveals what is on her mind.

"Ah, Jamet, Jamet," she exclaims, "you have gained your end! If I am to die it is on account of you, and the fair words you have spoken of me, without cause or reason!"

Her women, moved with genuine compassion and perturbed for the state of her soul, fearing her to be on the brink of eternity, urge her, perhaps too peremptorily, to make her peace with God by forgiving her persecutor. In reply she bursts out once more in her indignation and misery, striking her heart:

"I swear by God and on my soul, and on the baptism I received at the font, that never once have I done my lord any disservice or any wrong!"

On the sixth day of her illness Charles VII sends over his own physician, Master Robert Poictevin, priest, who is able to report on his return that there are more favorable symptoms, although (he adds significantly) *"riens n'y prouffitoit"*—she takes no advantage of them. The increasing languor and despondency of the Dauphine are evident; she is making no fight for life. Next day Jamet de Tillay, sent by the King to the Dauphine's apartment for the latest bulletin, meets Master Guillaume Leothier, the Dauphin's physician, and pesters him with questions. The doctor answers briefly that the Dauphine is nearer death than life; and Jamet, licking his lips, departs to retail his old scandals to two members of the royal entourage in the presence of the Burgundian Ambassador, Monsieur de Charmy. On de Charmy's observing that if the Dauphine dies the Dauphin should marry some one capable of giving him an heir, Jamet implies plainly that her death will be no disaster.

"Villainous and evil words," says Pierre de Brézé, Seneschal of Poitou, hotly to Dr. Robert Poictevin at dinner that same night.

Sunday drags along, and Monday. The Dauphine lies still, staring into vacancy. On the Monday evening she rouses, and again cries aloud her solemn oath of fidelity; and the Seneschal of Poitou, who is in the room, wrung with generous pity for her, cries aloud after her, thinking of Jamet:

"Ah! faux et mauvais ribault, elle meurt par toi!" (Ah, treacherous, evil scoundrel! Her death lies at your door!)

And now, as the evening shadows begin to fall, arrives once more the *venerable et discrete personne,* Master Robert Poictevin, priest and physician; this time to medicine the soul of his patient, who is plainly sinking. As he is giving her absolution after confession one of her maids of honor, Marguerite de Salignac, enters, and, evidently overwrought with anxiety for her mistress's soul, asks eagerly whether she has forgiven Jamet de Tillay, begging Master Robert to urge her to do so. The priest, not without displeasure, answers that the Dauphine does not appear to bear ill-will against Jamet, that she has declared her general forgiveness, and that he does not propose disturbing her again in this matter. But Marguerite insists on his mention-ing the hateful name directly. His own conscience is not quite satisfied on the point, and he turns to address his penitent again. The scene, reported *verbatim* in the inquiry, is deep with pathos.

"Madame," asks the priest, *"vous souvient il bien de Dieu?"*

"Oy, maistre Robert," answers the tired voice.

"Madame, ne l'obliez pas."

"Nenny, je ne l'oblieray pas."

> ["Madame, are you well mindful of God?"
> "Yes, Master Robert."
> "Do not forget Him, Madame."
> "Nay, I will not forget Him."]

Then the priest puts to her once more the question which Marguerite de Salignac's perturbation has brought so emphatically to the fore. Master Robert would have been content otherwise, no doubt, to have taken it for granted. He is obviously a gentle man, moved himself at the distress and weakness of his penitent: but he has his duty to her and Almighty God to perform.

"Madame," he says, bending over her, *"avez vous pas pardonné à tout le monde?"* ["Madame, you have forgiven everyone, have you not?"]

Even now he does not pronounce the name of Jamet; but a flood of bitterness rises to the lips of the dying girl. She knows well what the question means.

"Non! en vérité," she cries. ["No, truly!"]

"Sauf vostre respect, Madame," answers the mild priest, *"vous l'avez pardonné et vous le devez faire."* ["Pardon, Madame, but you have forgiven him, as you should."]

This time it is the motherly Jehanne de Tucé who leans over the bed and begs the Dauphine, for the sake of her soul and God's pardon, to forgive her enemy. Three times the Dauphine repeats stubbornly that she has not forgiven Jamet. At length she gives in, for she too knows what she is soon about to face.

"Je le pardonne donc," she murmurs wearily, *"et de bon coeur."* ["I forgive him, then, with all my heart."]

But nobody among those present can remember afterwards whether she has actually pronounced the name of her persecutor or not. She sinks into languor again, while Master Poictevin, standing by the window, opens his book and begins to recite the prayers for the dying by the last glimmer of August daylight. Marguerite de Hacqueville, standing near the pillow, sees the dying lips move, and bends low to catch the words. "But for my pledged word," murmurs the Dauphine, "I might well repent ever having landed in France." And a little later Jehan Boutet, apothecary (and probably spy) to the Dauphin, standing near the bedside, hears those last bitter words with which the little Scots Princess, at the age of twenty-one, takes leave of this false world:

> *"Fy de la vie de ce monde, et ne m'en parlez plus, et plus qu'autre chose m'ennuie."*
>
> ["Fie on the life of this world! Speak to me no more of it, for more than anything it wearies me."]

The next day the King, the Queen, and the Dauphin left Châlons for Tours; Charles stricken with real sorrow, *dolant, couroucé et troublé,* Marie actually ill with grief, Louis demonstrating the correct behavior of a bereaved husband. While she was dying he had impressed an ambassador from Metz with his tears and lamentation. "O God! what a destiny He has reserved for me! Never one day of my life have I known good fortune, and now He takes from me the only thing in the world I loved!" . . . "Thus," exclaims his audience, greatly moved, "did this noble and excellent Prince lament the death of his noble and virtuous consort. God be merciful to them both!"

But it was the King who established the foundation of Masses for the girl's soul. While the Chapter of St. Stephen at Châlons, having buried her remains in three leaden caskets, according to custom, near the high altar, are singing the thirty days' Requiem, while the poor of Châlons are receiving the ten pence each appointed for them, the poets who celebrated her beauty are also mourning her. Blosseville, who had paid her such gallant high-flown courtesy, produces a ballade which echoes, very far away and faintly, some of the music of Villon's Ballade of Dead Ladies. "You who speak of the beauty of Helen," he cries—

Vous qui parlés de la beaulté d'Elaine,
Qui de Paris fut en Grèce ravie,
Et de Judit la Preuse souveraine,
Par qui perdit Olloferne la vie,
Avoir deussiez de parler plus d'envie
D'une pur qui bien devons priser l'M,
Qui en estoit par trop plus assouvie:
Je requier Dieu qu'il en veuille avoir l'ame.

De cela fut Polissenne moult plaine,
Dont Achillès vouloyt faire s'amye,
Et Elisa, c'est chose bien certaine,
Que Sicheüs ne tint pas ennemye. . . .

And so, evoking the spirits of other fair noble women of old time, to the Envoy:

Que voulez vous que plus je vous en dye?
Fille de Roy, de Daulphin fut la fame,
Trop tost la prist si griefve maladye;
Je requier Dieu qu'il en veuille avoir l'ame.

And there is a more popular sequence, a song found in a Book of Hours of the Dauphine's sister, Isabella of Brittany, attributed to her and set to music; an amateurish jog-trot enough:

La très-doulce Vierge Marie,
Veillez ceulx et celles garder
Qui orront piteuses nouvelles
Orresendroit et raconter
De Madame la Daulphine
Trespassée nouvellement. . .

"Adieu, Daulphin, mon très-chier Sire,"
A plourer la dame se print.
"Pour vous j'avoie la mer passée,
Ou j'ay prins moult de grans plaisirs.
Si avoit treſtout mon linaige
De France et d'Ecosse aussy,
Car j'avoie eſté mariée
Au plus noble des fleurs de lis."

Of the seven ſtanzas of this bellman's verse one has a couple of lines begging the *noble duchesse de Bourgoigne,* Dame Isabeau, Catherine of France, the Comtesse de Charolais, and the Duchess of Brittany, to ſtrive to "bring peace to the Fleur de Lys." The words may conceal some faint reproach addressed to Louis.

But the moſt curious specimen of funereal verse lamenting the Dauphine is a poem of some eighteen verses in the Scottish language, quoted by the compiler of the Book of Pluscarden. He calls it *Lamentacio domini Dalphini Franciæ pro morte uxoris suae, dictæ Margaretæ*—the Lament of my Lord the French Dauphin for the death of his wife, Margaret by name. This (says the compiler) "was composed in the French tongue and placed on Margaret's tomb, and is here translated, by order of her brother James II, into the Scots tongue."

It certainly did not appear on Margaret's tomb. M. Marcel Thibault supposes that it was written to order by some hack, *quelque plat rimeur,* in Scotland, placed on some Scottish cenotaph, and thereby attributed in the popular mind to Louis himself. It is a masterpiece of dour Scottish will-power. I give the first three of its leaden stanzas.

The michti Makar of the major munde,
Quhilk reuly rollis thir hevinly regionis rownd,
About this erd, be mocioune circuler,
Ger all the cloudis of the hevin habound,
And souk vp all thir watteris hal and sounde,
Baith of salt sey, of burne, well, and revere;
To weip with me this wofull waymentyng,
This petwys playnt of a Princes but peire,
Quhilk dulfull Deed has tane till his duelling.

Fill burnis, wellis, reueris and fontayns,
Baith stankis and louchis and waleis of montayns,
Of glowdis of sorow, of angger and distres;
And baith my hart, in endles wo that payns,
For derfnes and dyspyt of Deed nocht fayns,
Quhilk aa ws reft sa ryal a riches—
Wes neuir yit more gret pete of a Princes,
In quhame regnyt flour of nobilite—
Helpe to murn, and murn her mare and les,
Quhilk for diseis dayly but dreid I dee.

Ger all the ayre that in the hycht above is,
And all the wyndis that vnder the hevyn amovis,
Turn all in sobbyng and in sichyng soore;
Ger all thir foulis that melody contruvis,
And all thir birdis that syngand heir for luveis,
Turn all thair joy in soro and in coore,
And help to murn this dul my lady foore,
And wary weird, quhilk banyst as of France
The mirroure of vertu and warldis glore,
Quhilk Deed has reft but reuth or rapentance. . . .

After transcribing five of these verses the monk of Pluscarden revolts and will waste no more ink on such stuff. "Nocht withstandying thair is mare of this Lamentacioun," he observes drily, ". . . this may suffyce; for the complant is bot fenyeit (feigned) thing." And he continues with the second part, called the Answer of Reason, which is yet another eighteen verses of heavy plodding. There is consolation, however, if not poetry, in this, and the last verse almost rises to a strain of music:

Tak gud comfurte, and leife in hop of grace,
And thing how scho throu vertu and goodnace
  Faith luffit and louit with God and man has beyn;
And think how that x *M yeire that wasse,*
Quhen it is gane, semys bot an houre of spasse,
  Lik till a dreme that we had dremyt yeistreyn. . . .

The tribute of Master Maurice Buchanan himself—if it is he—to his countrywoman is sober and sincere. *"Sed heu prodolor!"* he writes, recording her death in the flower of her age. "But alas, and woe is me! that I should have to set down these sorrowful words of her death . . . for her unlooked-for death at Châlons in Champagne, where she lies now, oppressed the hearts of many with exceeding grief, whether in France or Scotland. I who write this saw her every day while she lived, disporting herself with the King and Queen of France, and so continuing for nine years; but afterwards, at the time of the contract of marriage between Henry King of England and the daughter of the King of Sicily, brother to the French Queen, I saw her within eight days in health and dead, disemboweled, and laid in her tomb in the cathedral of the said city of Châlons, at the north corner of the high altar, in a leaden coffin there."

In October Charles instituted the inquiry into "certain words said and uttered by Jamet de Tillay concerning the most high and mighty Princess the late Madame la Dauphine" which growing opinion demanded. Two high lawyers, Gerard le Boursier, Counselor and Master of Requests, and Guillaume Bigot, of the High Court of Justiciary, were charged with it. The evidence of Madame de Tucé was taken first, followed by that of the Dauphine's other maids of honor. The Queen herself, whose indignation was undoubtedly sincere, permitted herself to be questioned by the Chancellor, Jacques Juvenal des Ursins, and a Master of Requests. The inquiry dragged on, with two long breaks; Tillay shuffled and hedged and denied, with convenient lapses of memory. The Dauphin, looming in the background, is given one significant reference in the evidence of Annette and Jehanne de Guise, the Queen's maids:

> Jehanne de Guise, lady to the Queen, says further that yesterday after dinner the said Prégente and Marguerite de Salignac sent to find Annette de Guise her sister, she did not then know why; but on Annette's return she told her (the witness) that the said Marguerite de Salignac had informed her that she was charged by Monseigneur le Dauphin to search for all letters which she knew to belong to Madame la Dauphine. She (Marguerite) then asked her (Annette) if she possessed any, to which the said Annette answered 'Yes,' but that they were in her coffer with the Queen's furniture. On which the said Marguerite said that she must give her the key.

The inquiry faded out in the manner of so many hundreds of its kind. Jamet de Tillay received no known punishment, nor apparently was he dismissed from Court, and the matter was discreetly allowed to drop. Duclos, writing in the eighteenth century, declares that Charles VII stifled the affair. Several gentlemen about the Court (he adds) including Louis de Laval and Regnault de Fresnay, were bitterly incensed at the escape of de Tillay and wanted to call him out; but the King forbade this, and according to Duclos (there is no other evidence) actually sent away from Court certain champions of the Dauphine's honor whose *trop grande vivacité* had become embarrassing. Obviously some high name had to be kept out of the business. Whose but Louis'? It is difficult to perceive throughout the whole miserable story anything but entire connivance on his part.

In 1479, thirty-four years later, when Louis is himself nearing the grave and thinking about casting up his accounts, the Dauphine's name occurs for the last time in his life. She had expressly wished to be buried in the abbey church of St. Laon at Thouars, where she had built and founded a chapel. She had then not been able to afford the necessary six hundred crowns. In 1459 Abbot Nicolas Godard prevailed at length on Louis to discharge the debt, in 1479 to have Margaret translated there, in accordance with her last will and testament. On November 14th, 1479, the three leaden caskets were reinterred in her chapel at Thouars. They remained there until 1562.

§ 4

The tired heart had long since crumbled into dust when, in the year 1701, three leaden caskets containing the "honorable portions" of the body of a direct kinsman of Margaret Stuart, Dauphine of France, were laid in the parish church of St. Germain-en-Laye, the little Royal town near Paris, three hundred miles to the north-west of her last resting place: the remains of James II, the last Catholic and Stuart King of England, the founder of the British Navy. Like Margaret he died in exile, and his last years—those of a saint and an ascetic—were graven with suffering and melancholy. Like hers, his name was (and, what is more, has always been) industriously traduced by enemies of his House and Faith: especially by eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth-century English writers on history, some of them Hanoverians and all of them (in God's inscrutable design) Whigs, repeating each other's judgments like malignant parrots.[9]

. . . The unhappy Stuarts!

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[9] "It has now been fashionable for near half a century," wrote Dr. Johnson in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1760, "to defame and vilify the House of Stuart, and to exalt and magnify the reign of Elizabeth. . . . Yet there remains still among us, not wholly extinguished, a zeal for truth, a desire for establishing right in opposition to fashion."

3

THE APPRENTICE, 1436-1461

§ 1

It is necessary to return to the year 1436, the year of the Dauphin's marriage.

In October Charles VII left Tours on a long journey through the provinces adhering to the Crown, taking his son with him. This journey was to complete Louis' education, to illustrate the theory of kingship which he had already been taught, to impress on his keen receptive intelligence, by contact with lands and people, the meaning of the work he would have one day to perform. It is an invaluable method, and still the only one by which a man may realize the significance of such abstract words as "England," "France," "America." The same admirable pedagogy, it may be recollected, was practised by Mr. Squeers. "W-I-N-D-E-R, winder"—and the pupil was immediately thrown out to clean it, thereby fixing in his mind the essence and quiddity of a window for all time.

The way of the King and the Dauphin lay through Touraine, Berry, and Auvergne—a new world already, with its mountains and strange people and its stranger *patois*—to the great town of

Lyons, where presents were made them; thence into Dauphiny, the personal fief of the eldest son of the French Crown, a proud rich province, over which before long Louis was to make his first experiments in ruling, and that successfully; thence into Languedoc, where the olives grow and the sun beats hot, and so to Montpellier. Charles had had business to transact all along: the reception of homage and tribute, the presiding over provincial States-General, the hearing of complaints, the awarding of justice. And now Louis was to see not only the rich lands, each distinct from its neighbor, with wheat and vines, sheep and cattle, farms and castles, and the towns with their burghers and merchandise, but the effect on them of war and a distracted government; for turning north from a stay in Montpellier he and his father came into the orbit of the chief of the organized brigandage which at this time was freely ravaging the South of France and was now attracted to the Center. The name of this brigand chief was Rodriguo de Villandrando, whom we have met. At the request of the citizens of Tours, the Queen, Marie of Anjou, and the young Dauphine had recently begged Villandrando by letter to spare Touraine, and he had gracefully acquiesced. But Charles was determined to have at him. With four thousand men at arms and five hundred horsemen the King, with Louis at his heels, pushed on to Saint-Flour, across the Bourbonnais, and on to Roanne, Villandrando falling back before him with his band (yet with such studied impudence that the Royal *fourriers* entering Saint-Flour to prepare the King's lodging in advance were beaten by Villandrando's ruffians and their baggage-convoy rifled) and devastating the countryside as he retired. Finally Villandrando retired in good order across the Rhône into the Emperor's country: as we may well assume, to the disgust of the Dauphin, who was longing to prove himself a man and to smell a battle.

He got his chance very soon, in 1437, against the ancient enemy, the English. Charles determined at Bourges in that year to thrust out the English garrisons of the Upper Loire. His forces set out, Louis joyously prancing with them, his "governor" the Comte de la Marche at his side. They arrived at Gien, and began operations in the old harsh, wasteful, effective way, in the Picrocholian Manner, destroying the country all round the hemmed-in garrisons, burning the wheatfields and the vineyards, cutting down the trees, laying waste the neighboring farmsteads. The Comte de la Marche with three thousand men assaulted and took Charny, sparing the lives of its inhabitants and garrison—for he was a devout and merciful Christian warrior. Meanwhile Charles began to attack Château-Landon; but his leisurely methods exasperated his son, whose youthful fire required instant action. After three days Louis himself took over the attack, urging on his troops and storming the stronghold of Château-Landon with few losses. Being in command of an operation for the first time, being full of the fight, being of a temper which was not yet kept in invariable control by prudence, Louis was for treating the vanquished with all the rigor of the game, and would not at first listen to counsel. The traitorous French who had fought against the French King should be beheaded; the English dogs all hanged. Ultimately the advice of La Marche prevailed on his headstrong ward, and the prisoners were mercifully handled. Louis returned to Gien, to the consummation of his unhappy marriage, and was off again almost at once to join his father before the walls of Montereau, a strong point held by the English. Here Charles, once so languid and despairing, showed a huge contempt for danger, heading his troops after the artillery preparation, dashing through the moat waist-deep in water, ascending the ladder, falling on the enemy sword in hand. "This war," he said roughly to those of his captains who would have restrained him, "is mine and no one else's." Here, after the English garrison had been driven into the battered castle and forced to submit, Louis arrived; and this time his attitude towards the vanquished deserves notice. He is no longer the furious hot-head. He discriminates. The English soldiers in Montereau are allowed at his request to go free, with their belongings, for they are foreigners obeying the orders of their King and the rules of warfare. The French prisoners, on the contrary, are traitors, and shall be hanged.

And now, at the approach of winter, the King and the Dauphin decided to suspend military operations and make their entry into Paris. The capital had been for two years free of the English, whose commander, Willoughby, had been forced, in the May of 1436, to withdraw his garrison of 1500 men from the Bastille and fall back amid the hoots of the populace on Rouen. The University of Paris, which had distinguished itself so long by servile loyalty to the Anglo-Burgundians and the Regent Bedford in particular, hastened to invite the King of France within the walls; a cynically facile transference of affection. (*"Université"* is a feminine noun.) The Parisian populace, by nature *frondeur,* received their king with the customary official pageants, and afterwards grumbled at the expense; for 1438 brought a winter of terrible cold and famine to a town already bled white by the English, and the sick poor laying starving in the ruined hospitals, or froze to death in the streets. The entry of Charles VII and the Dauphin, both strangers to their capital, was made through decorated streets, in which, at various stations along the way from the Porte St. Denis to Notre Dame, fountains gushed wine.

The usual Misteries were played by actors while the Royal procession halted: the Mistery of the Incarnation at the Port aux Peintres, the Nativity outside St. Martin-des-Champs, the Last Judgment at the Trinity—this last presented by the famous Confraternity of the Passion. On the Parvis in front of Notre-Dame the ecclesiastical dignitaries of the Diocese of Paris and the Rector and Doctors of the University presented a loyal address. It is difficult not to perceive on the face of Charles VII a faint tight grin as Master Nicolas Midi, the University orator, one of the more implacable judges of St. Joan, describes to the King the unconsolable grief and unrequited longing which have martyred his faithful University during the long absence of her rightful lord. The French have a national sense of irony, finely developed. Charles listens to this comic rhodomontade, and passes on to the Cathedral to take the oath on the Gospels and to assist in the singing of *Te Deum;* after which he and the Dauphin retire to the Palace. That night there are bonfires in the streets and free meat and drink for the poor.

Charles and Louis stayed in Paris for three weeks, and returned to Tours. A rooted distaste for Paris will possess Louis henceforth, throughout his reign. He will enter his capital on as few occasions as possible, make the shortest posible stay, and return once more with joy to the kind skies of Touraine, the soft clear air, the people he knows.

What preoccupied Charles VII now was the pressing need of money, not only to prosecute further drives against the English but to pay the debts incurred by previous sallies. The country was weak and impoverished; it was difficult to raise money; the price of living was high, food scarce. Poitou could do nothing. Charles set out, once more accompanied by his son, for Languedoc, presided at a meeting of the parliament, heard the usual complaints of poverty and hunger, and went on to Lyons, leaving Louis, at the age of fifteen, behind him as temporary Lieutenant-General of Languedoc. This was Louis' first administrative task. He bent himself to it with serious diligence and strong good sense. The Languedoc country was oppressed with evils: famine, pest, floods, lawsuits, brigands. De Villandrando and his band were on the prowl. The English were near at hand, in Guyenne. The boy Lieutenant began the habit of a lifetime by choosing his own officials from the men around him, the men he knew. He travels through the countryside, observing and listening. He takes steps to cope with the most pressing of his problems, employing (once again this will be one of his fixed habits) money to break up the bands of *routiers,* unemployed men-at-arms and miscellaneous ruffians who infest the neighborhood of Toulouse, punishing others with severity, segregating the supposedly-leprous unfortunates called *cagots* from the healthy population, settling differences between quarrelsome nobles, and calling up an armed force for the defense of the Bordelais frontier against the English. Meanwhile he steadfastly collects money from the various States-General. They groan, but pay. For the preparations against the English more money is needed. Again Louis approaches the States-General, and again the money is found. The youthful administrator has a way of getting what he wants; and certainly he can point to results —perhaps not finally successful, but at any rate demonstrating an honest grappling with an almost hopeless situation.

After six months' rule Charles recalled his son, after several summonses. It is not known for what reason. Possibly the King had already realized his son's tendency to take government into his own hands, for though Louis had informed him of his frontier project he had moved without waiting for the King's reply. Possibly, again, he had had some inkling of the coming thunderstorm: for rebelliousness was brewing among certain of the feudal nobles, the Great Vassals, whose interests were by no means concerned with the steady re-establishment of order in France. The young Duke of Bourbon headed the malcontents. He had for some time been working for trouble, entering into alliance with the Duke of Brittany, whose friends were the English, and with the Duke of Alençon, a traitor and a fool. The plot grew to a head. Bourbon's plan was to place the Dauphin, whose antipathy to his father was even now notorious, at the head of the rebels and to seize the King in person. Without doubt Charles knew something of this. On Louis' return, sulkily and unwillingly enough, doubtless, from the engaging experiment of Languedoc, his father sent him immediately to Poitou in the same capacity, out of harm's way. Poitou was also overrun with bandits and roving companies of men-at-arms, existing by robbery, plunder, and murder. Here, again, Louis showed his powers in suppressing the evildoers. But the thunderclouds were gathering and were soon to burst in the rebellion of feudal nobles known (by analogy with the Hussite troubles in Bohemia) as the "Praguerie."

The nature of the great feudal nobles of France at this period may here be briefly considered. The most powerful of them was the House of Burgundy, whose vast splendor and wealth, as we have already observed, placed the Royal House in the shade. It is to the lands of Burgundy that one must look during this entire century for the fine arts, pageantry, dignity, religious vitality, all activities of the spirit. In 1435 the treaty of Arras had united Charles VII and Burgundy, after the death of Bedford and the dissolving of the long and powerful Anglo-Burgundian association. In a few years more we shall see Louis XI at grips with Burgundy again, and the final defeat of this great house. It is necessary to remember that the Dukes of Burgundy considered themselves the equals of the Kings of France, to whom they sent ambassadors; that at this time some contemporaries, observing the misfortune and poverty of the royal house, looked naturally to Burgundy to supersede it; that the extent of the Burgundian dominion over Picardy and the Low Countries menaced the north of France and Paris especially; and that the heads of this House hardly considered themselves Frenchmen. The attitude of the other members of *la Haute Féodalité*—Bourbon, Alençon, Brittany, Armagnac, Nemours—varied according to the dictates of policy, ambition, or greed, and they would as soon oppose the Crown as not. "How strange this French nobility appears!" observes M. Jacques Bainville. "Now faithful and devoted, ready to shed its blood, decimated at Crécy, decimated at Poitiers, decimated at Agincourt; now turbulent and in arms against the State!" Yet, as he adds, they were not a caste apart. The Great Vassals almost all had some of the blood of the Capetian family in their veins. The reason for the Praguerie, and for the succeeding troubles with the Great Vassals from which Louis XI at length emerged victor, is to be found in the Crown's measures for restoring order. Such a measure as that promulgated by Charles VII in 1439, forbidding the nobles to raise companies of men-at-arms, was infuriating. These loose and roving companies the Flayers were useful to the feudal lords.[1]

At Niort, in Picardy, during the month of February, 1440, the Dauphin Louis had a visitor: the Duke of Alençon, his godfather. Alençon was known to be deep in treachery, hand in glove with the English, and half-mad at the best. Only a short time before he had offered the English commander at Avranches, who had thrown back an attack by Charles VII, the use of his men. The interview was long, and there is no report of it; but its tenor is obvious. Alençon had recently signed a pact with his cousin Bourbon. Bourbon, working busily against the Crown, had already met Louis at Tours, and had doubtless done his best to widen the breach between father and son. Louis was seventeen years old, already used to government and eager for more, ambitious, impatient, willful; at loggerheads with his father. The results of the interview were not long in appearing. The pious and excellent Comte de la Marche, Louis' mentor and "governor," was dismissed. He returned to Charles at Angers and reported that the Dauphin was meditating disobedience and was determined to proclaim his independence, and also—significantly—that Louis was of opinion that "he could very well insure the profit of the kingdom." If Charles needed any further illumination, it was given him shortly afterwards. He learned that the Dauphin had undertaken to seize the government of France and to place his father under surveillance.

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[1] Their total at this period is assessed at about 30,000, all men trained in arms. Louis used some of them at Dieppe in 1443.

Charles roused himself to action. From Amboise, where he had removed, letters were despatched to the loyal towns giving them warning and command to resist the rebels "under the shadow of Our said son." His constable Richemont and two other proved captains were sent to Bourbon to demand an explanation. Bourbon replied with insults. The King gathered his troops and advanced into Poitou, determined to bring the prodigal to heel. Louis, from his headquarters at Niort, where he was entrenched with Alençon, proclaimed himself a reformer of abuses, promising the abolition of the taxes called *aides* and peace with the English—these last especially addressed to Languedoc and his own fief of Dauphiny. Richemont and Charles lose St. Maixent in Poitou to Alençon's troops, retake it, and execute what traitors have not escaped to

Niort. Since no support arrives from Bourbon or the English, Alençon and Louis ride for Auvergne, where the Bourbon troops are, and there Louis renews his promise. The Duke of Burgundy ſteps in with an offer to mediate. Meanwhile Charles and Richemont continue ſteadily to assault and take the disaffected fortresses, and Charles publishes his terms, which are concise enough. The rebels muſt dismiss their forces and acknowledge their sovereign; and finally, they muſt return "Monseigneur le Dauphin, my son" to his duty, and, if he refuses, they muſt refuse him any kind of support or assiſtance. A liſt of persons and fortresses to be surrendered follows.

It is evident that the plot had no chance of success. The rebels return a pacific answer. They have always acknowledged the King as their sovereign lord, and they will dismiss their forces if the King will put an end to "the sad pillaging (*dolente pillerie*) of the poor throughout his realm." As for the Dauphin, they will counsel him to return, in all humility and obedience, to his father. But Louis' own reply, for all its assumption of deference and prayers for pardon, is to bargain. He asks for a plenary pardon for his associates; and for himself (to keep up his eſtate) he wants Dauphiny. Charles answers mildly but firmly commanding his return, when these things shall be discussed; and when Louis retorts with more insolent conditions the King resumes hoſtilities and brings the rebels to defeat. The Dauphin, seeing his allies broken and his forces melted away, decides to submit, and with Bourbon appears before Charles at Cusset. The scene between father and son does not precisely resemble a similar scene in Scripture.

"You are welcome, Louis," says Charles grimly as the two rebels make their threefold genuflexion and ask his pardon. "You have been away a long time. Go now and reſt for to-day in your lodging, and we will speak with you to-morrow."

Next morning, after Mass, Louis and Bourbon appear before the King in council. Louis asks for a pardon for three other of his accomplices, La Trémoïlle, de Chaumont, and de Prie. The King will not grant this.

Louis: Then, my Lord, I must go back, for I have promised them this.

Charles: Go, Louis, if you wish. The doors are open. If they are not wide enough for you I will have twenty fathoms of the walls knocked down to allow you to pass through. I find it very strange that you should have given your word thus, without my permission; nevertheless it does not matter. The House of France is not so lacking in princes that it does not possess one or two who can show more zeal than you in upholding its greatness and honor.

With these curt words Charles turns away from his son and speaks with Bourbon, who takes the oath of fidelity. A little later Charles announces by letters-patent the humble submission and pardon of the Dauphin and of Bourbon. Louis is punished by being deprived of his household, his confessor and cook excepted. Shortly afterwards he is given the governorship of Dauphiny and a salary of 800 livres a month. ("It was necessary," observes P. Champion, "to find some occupation for this demon.") But before he takes up his duties he is once more to accompany his father and see much hard fighting.

Charles VII, having crushed the Praguerie, is in the saddle again. The English in this September 1440 are attacking Harfleur. In Champagne a company of the Brigands, the Flayers, are at their old tricks. Charles marches first of all against these, strikes, captures some twenty of their chiefs at Bar-sur-Aube, tries them, and has the satisfaction of seeing their ringleader, Alexander the Bastard of Bourbon,[2] flung in a sack into the

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[2] He had been concerned in the plot of the Praguerie.

Aube. Having dealt the Flayers this blow the King rides north to Normandy, accompanied by Louis, to tackle the English before the walls of Pontoise. The operation is necessary, of some magnitude, and costly, and the Parisians are to pay for it, in the shape of the heaviest tax for fifty years. One may imagine the tavern growls. The siege of Pontoise is begun. Louis stands before the walls all June and July, 1441. Against him are the Duke of York and Talbot, that war-bitten captain. Once the English sally forth and cross the Oise river, forcing the French command back on Conflans. But Charles and Louis are dogged, and the counter-assault is prepared. On September 19th the Dauphin's storm-troops, headed by Louis himself, burst into Pontoise after a whole day's bitter fighting. Louis is among the first to scale the walls and fall on the retreating enemy. Pontoise is taken, and Charles marches south to fall on the English at Saint-Sever and Dax, where Louis again directs the assault. But a greater task is ahead of him, and this youth of twenty-three is to prove himself even more a soldier. His other qualities have been also given exercise during these last months; he has been humiliated, he has had to bow to the will of another, he has failed in an attempt on the throne, he has had to show pliancy and urbanity. He is now to take a strong fortress at Dieppe from the English, who have sworn to hold it to the death.

The victory of Dieppe has already been described in an early chapter. Three hundred English died in the defense of the Pollet; the others were taken prisoner. It was a crowning victory, a smashing blow at the English in their own territory. The fine new bastille of Talbot was destroyed, and Louis returned to Paris, and thence at once to the south to fullfil yet one more task in his father's behalf. Jean IV, Duke of Armagnac, an insolent Anglophile, had taken advantage of the Crown's engagement with the English to make trouble. Louis attacked the strong fortress of l'Ile-Jourdain, where Armagnac had retired; took it; humbled its owner; annexed his riches; went on; annexed the Comté of Rodez, held by the Bastard of Armagnac; subdued the Bastard, and returned to Tours.

Partly for the sake of avoiding monotony, partly because in such a small canvas one cannot include all detail, I have passed over, throughout this period, the greater number of taxes and subsidies raised by Louis personally in various parts of the French dominions for these war-engagements. They were heavy, he demanded them, he got them. He drew money also from (for example) many lesser feudal landowners who made submission to the Crown at Toulouse, on his way to punish Armagnac. He is thus seen in his early youth to be a gallant soldier and a very careful, very exact, very dogged collector of money: a prudent warrior, with a steady eye on the future. In this he may be said to resemble Marlborough, though Marlborough's hoard was the wages of prostitution and treachery, and his patriotism nil. This trait in Louis grows stronger with the years as his love of battle wanes, or rather, is overruled by his prudence: and he scrapes up money not to hoard it, or to buy himself pleasure, but to restore his country.

§ 2

The Swiss, in connection with whom the word "charge" has for so long in modern times automatically summoned up a vision of bills rather than battle,[1] were in the middle of the

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[1] But let there not be forgotten the sacrificial gallantry of the Papal Swiss Guard at the sack of Rome in 1527, nor that of Louis XVI's Swiss at the storming of the Tuileries.

XVth century still fighting towards that federation of independent cantons of which the nucleus had been established in the XIIIth century by the national hero, William Tell, who adds to fearless courage and statesmanship the less common attribute of having never existed. At this time Frederic of Austria, master of the unwieldy Empire, was determined to subdue those cantons of the confederation which resisted re-absorption into the Empire. He was on terms of friendship with Charles VII, and asked him for help, in return for help which the Emperor Sigismond had given Charles in his worst days. Charles looked round for means of helping Frederic, and was visited with an idea at once simple, beneficial, and brilliant. The twenty thousand-odd ruffians infesting France known as the Flayers were one of his greatest problems. He determined to rid France of their presence by sending most of them to the Emperor to fight against the Swiss; and it was the Dauphin Louis who was to add yet again to his military experience by leading these warriors off the soil of France into the Empire.

It must have been an extraordinary progress. Like Villon's Coquillards (with whom some of the Flayers were inextricably associated) the ranks of this mixed army—some 4000 men-at-arms and 6000 archers, with artillery—were a League of Nations; Bretons, English, Scots, Gascons, Spaniards, Lombards, Germans, Flemings, Normans; all trained in war and enjoying the most odious reputation. Their commanders were as they. This army of gallows-birds was ordered to assemble at Langres, on the Marne, and did so, its numbers swollen by sutlers, baggage men, camp-followers, women, and miscellaneous riff-raff to some twenty thousand, clad in every kind of costume and bawling in every known European language and as many species of thieves'-Latin. Column of route was formed, and the Dauphin Louis took his place on horseback at the head of its strongest company, riding amid a bodyguard of 300 Spaniards and accompanied by some of his household and by Jehan de Bueil, a fine soldier who had distinguished himself in the Norman campaign. The disreputable column set itself in motion, and at each nightly halt the inhabitants of the countryside had reason to tear their hair, since anything from a hen-roost to a cathedral was good for looting to these warriors. So they straggled on, living on the land, sped by the curses of every succeeding district, till they neared the Rhine and halted before the fortress of Montbeliard, nearly opposite Bâle. The troops' behavior on their recent passage through the territories of Burgundy had been far from good.

"Traitors, Burgundian dogs," they yell as they pass through the villages, "where is your Duke? He's asleep!"

One sees the fierce, dark, grinning faces and the brandished pikes and swords as the column tramps along in a cloud of dust, while the peasantry bang and bar their gates, and hens, ducks, and dogs fly in alarm. One hears the raucous voices, the foreign accents. If the Flayers are terrible on the march, they are more terrible when the halt comes; for then the foraging parties set out to gather in food and money, and torture and arson become a commonplace. Their hundred and forty captains exercise no discipline in this matter, and obviously share the loot. Louis himself can impose no punishment on this ferocious rabble. He enters the town of Montbéliard, and the town council of Dijon at once appears with a complaint against the behavior of his men. The Duke of Burgundy, Philip the Good, himself makes a present to Louis of 10,000 gold *saluts,* with 3500 for his chief officers. Louis never refused money.

Within a week (August 23, 1444) the march was resumed towards Bâle, and a halt made at the castle of Waltighoffen, near the town. On the 24th Louis, disguising himself, made a personal survey of the walls of Bâle, was shot at from the walls, and returned to Waltighoffen. Then the Swiss, for whom the advance of the Flayers cannot have been any secret, brought up four thousand picked men who fell suddenly on the Flayers' advance-guard, routing them and sacking their camp. But Louis' ruffians, if they had no discipline on the march, were tough in the art of war. They in turn fell upon the Swiss—a large body of German horse figured in this movement—and drove them back under the walls of Bâle, leaving behind part of their force cut off, to be slaughtered to a man. The Dauphin's artillery came into action, his troops charged again, the remaining Swiss were penned in a hospital, bombarded, and, after three fierce assaults lost the day. The fighting was bitter, hand to hand among flames and smoke. The Swiss lost 1500 men and many wounded. In the archives of Bâle there is a document containing a conversation which summons up a picture of remarkable vividness, as if seen by moonlight. That night after the carnage the survivors of the Flayers straggled back to their quarters through the villages of Esch and Pleffingen. Before the château of Jehan de Thierstein a body of them halted, and a trumpeter took his trumpet and blew a loud discordant blast. Thierstein appeared, demanding what these men-at-arms wanted at such a late hour of the night. The trumpeter answered:

"We have been fighting all day."

"Who lost?" asked Thierstein.

"The Swiss were defeated."

"How many of your men have been killed?"

"Anything up to four thousand."

The actual figure was nearer eight thousand: a disproportionate number, with its own disciplinary moral. Louis himself had not taken part in the fight. He fought in person only for France. His advisers urged him next day to take Bâle; but in the meantime the citizens of Bâle had sent two Franciscan friars to beg the Dauphin to be merciful. The town is celebrated in Catholic history as the meeting place of the Council of Bâle, which had begun to sit in 1431 and was still in session. Could the eldest son of the Most Christian House of France allow a Council of the Church to be broken up by a rabble of cut-throats, and its city sacked? The same question is asked of him two or three days later at Altkirch, where a deputation arrives from the Holy Council itself: two cardinals, some bishops, several chevaliers, and burgesses. Louis answers that so far from wishing to lift a finger against Holy Church or her ministers it is his constant resolve, as it has been his ancestors', to be prepared to shed his blood in her defense;[2] but his business is to punish the enemies of the Duke of Austria, Emperor, friend, and shortly to become son-in-law of the French King. He is prepared to grant the people of Bâle a truce, pending their breaking away from the Swiss confederacy and promising not to bear arms against the House of Austria. . . .

There is no need to follow all the threads of this adventure. The youthful Louis displayed in it an extraordinary grasp of diplomacy. He left his army of ruffians in lower Alsace and returned with a treaty of alliance with the Swiss, who were to be so useful to him in later years. He had rid the soil of France of the presence of an army corps of brigands. He had also got his first wound in war, at the siege of Dambach in the Vosges on October 7, 1444, when an arrow from the walls pinned his knee to his saddle-bow. Relations between him and the Duke Philip of Burgundy, into whose territories the Flayers had penetrated too often, were decidedly strained; and when on his return Charles handed over to him the conduct of negotiations between the houses of France and Burgundy to settle this and other matters at issue between them, his attitude was cold, hostile, and politic. Even so early in his career, it would seem, he had made up his mind about Burgundy.

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[2] He had volunteered very early to fight against the Turk, now menacing Christianity in the Near East.

Louis returned to Court, to see the end of his unfortunate little Scottish wife and to contemplate with a jaundiced eye the state of affairs. A prince less impatiently eager to govern, much less devoured by ambition, might well have been embittered by the conditions at Court. Charles VII, the Victorious, formerly a man of chaste and pious life, has now become an elderly beau. He has a mistress, Agnes Sorel, the first of the royal mistresses *en titre* in France, the predecessor of the Maintenon, the Dubarry, and the Pompadour. Agnes leads the King by the nose. She is not the only royal mistress by any means—there is a train of them, including (they say) the humblest kind of ancillary beauties; but she is supreme. Louis, who loathes her, feigns politeness, and even makes her propitiatory gifts; but it is recorded that there are occasionally outbursts of dislike between them, and Louis is said one day to have boxed the Sultana's ears. His own object is fixed: his first attempt at dispossessing his father having failed, he will make another when opportunity serves. But here, again, that fatal propensity, which he frankly admitted in later years to Commynes, of being unable to keep his tongue quiet is his chief handicap. He begins to plot a *coup d'état*. The exact details of this plan are revealed in a deposition of Antoine de Chabannes, Comte de Dammartin, St. Joan's old comrade in arms, who had made the Swiss campaign with Louis, and who, daring and hardy as he was, seems to have possessed little liking and less nerve for this dangerous game.

At Easter, 1446, Louis is at the castle of Chinon with the Court. One day he summons Chabannes to his presence and takes him across the room to a window commanding the moat. A soldier of the Royal Scottish Bodyguard is crossing the moat at that moment.

"Look!" said Louis bitterly, "there are the fellows who hold the Kingdom of France in subjection."

"Who?" asks Chabannes.

"These Scots," answers Louis. "But one could prevent them if one wished."

He returns to the subject some time later, when the Court is at Razilly, having in the meantime employed Chabannes on a profitable minor mission. This time the two are riding side by side. "Look here," says Louis, taking Chabannes by the neck, "there is nothing for it but to put these fellows outside."

"How?" asks Chabannes.

"It is an easy matter," says the Dauphin. "I have fifteen or twenty arbalestriers and thirty archers, more or less. You have some archers, have you not? Send for them."

Chabannes observes that the matter is not so simple, since the King has all the men-at-arms at his command.

"Pooh, I have enough men for that," says Louis.

Chabannes asks how he proposes to bring off the *coup,* and Louis answers that by assembling his men one by one, unostentatiously, their numbers will not be perceived, and they can overcome the royal household and take Razilly with ease. "There are two small towers which will have to be taken at once, but that is nothing much."

Chabannes, the man of experience, still demurs. He points out that the thing is easier to conceive than to carry out, since after Razilly has been taken the royal troops will rally at once and retake it; but Louis is obstinate.

"If I were not going to take part in this affair myself," he says in effect, "no doubt my men would be chary of laying hands on the King in person. But I shall be there, I shall give my orders, and all will go well." He adds that it is his intention to seize the government, but not to deprive the King's men of their places. The actual government is for the most part in the hands of the Seneschal Pierre de Brézé, to whom Charles VII is devoted.

"I know you like de Brézé very well," says Louis to Chabannes.

"Most certainly," answers Chabannes.

"Very well," says Louis, "I am quite content that he should continue to hold the government as before, *but it shall be under me.*"

Chabannes is extremely uneasy. The Court is now a hotbed of intrigues and spying. The relations between Louis and his father are daily more strained, and the impatience and imperiousness of the Dauphin's temperament are hardly less obvious than the fact that his every action is taken note of by the familiars of Charles and de Brézé. Chabannes takes counsel secretly with Amaury d'Estissac, one of Louis' counselors, begging him to advise Louis not to attempt his project. A brother of Chabannes, being likewise informed, strongly urges him to take no part in it. The affair is already no secret, and both Charles and de Brézé know of it. On September 27, 1446, de Brézé takes a deposition from Antoine de Chabannes, and shortly afterwards Charles summons his son into his presence.

"Louis," he says, "I am aware of your ill-will towards the Seneschal, my loyal servant, and the project you have made against him to put him to death."

Louis coolly answers: "My Lord, I have done nothing in this matter which has not been advised by the Comte de Dammartin."

"By St. John," says the King, "I do not believe you!"

He summons Chabannes, who denies having suggested the murder of de Brézé to the Dauphin.

"With all respect to my Lord," cries Louis, "you are a liar!"

Chabannes, at this blow, draws himself up. "If you were not the King's son, my Lord, I should answer you in this affair my sword to yours (*de ma personne à la vostre*). Only that restrains me." And the King turns to his son. "Louis, I banish you from my kingdom for four months. You will go to Dauphiny."

The scene ends like a scene of melodrama. Louis, hatless, white with fury, stalks out, vowing vengeance. "By this head of mine, which bears no hat, I will revenge myself on those who have thrown me out of my house!"

For the next ten years the Dauphin will administer his own fief of Dauphiny in a manner which is clearly admirable. It is the last phase of his apprenticeship to the Crown, and he will prove the stuff of which he is made. Languedoc was the first stepping stone to the throne; Dauphiny is the second, and last. Louis' government of this territory, which has been the nominal appanage of the eldest sons of the Kings of France for a century past, will display all those qualities of kingship in him which have been growing to fruition throughout his youth. His tutors showed him the lessons of history, the duties of the ruler, the equality of all men before Death. Languedoc gave him the first opportunity of putting the theory of government into practice. Dauphiny will finally equip him for the task of his life; a task to which he brought perhaps more zest than any monarch before him or since.

The province of Dauphiny, whose two great towns are Valence and Grenoble, is at this time administered by the aged Sire de Gaucourt, but the real masters of the country are the ecclesiastical dignitaries, the Archbishop of Vienne, the bishops of Valence, Grenoble, Gap, and Die. It is Louis who, first of all the Dauphins of France, will force these powerful spiritual lords to recognize his sovereignty; for Louis will brook no division of rule. His contact with Dauphiny, indeed, has begun years ago, as far back as 1440, when he formally took possession of his province, and since then he has never lost his fief to view. Several minor reforms have been carried out under his instructions—the remission of certain taxes on towns, of duties on wheat, the regulation of trade and accounts, certain reforms of the Mint. In 1445 he orders a new coinage, bearing his name and arms. In the same year he issues an edict reforming the juridical system in Dauphiny, which has suffered from a plague of lawyers, and dismisses the aged Sire de Gaucourt in favor of the more capable Jehan Sanglier. But the full force of his hand is felt immediately on his taking possession of Dauphiny after his banishment. He is in disgrace, and as it were under open arrest; and he proceeds to make Dauphiny the model province of the Kingdom. From the moment of his entry he makes it clear that he is the master: the nobles who hold fiefs are summoned within the month to pay him homage and take the oath of fidelity. At Valence he establishes his chancellery, like a king. He raises a regular army of five companies of men-at-arms and others of arbalestriers, and recruits it by releasing volunteers from taxes. He establishes fairs, undertakes the repair of roads, looks to the exploitation of the mines, creates a post service, abolishes taxes which are a handicap to trade. He founds a University at Valence and extends considerable privileges to its students. He confirms the privileges of towns, of monasteries, reorganizes the territorial divisions of the country, suppresses the odious swarm of lawyers, establishes the Council of Dauphiny like a Parliament. His one object is to increase the prosperity of his fief, and he provides for this in the manner which he will shortly apply to France as a whole. His attitude towards the bourgeoisie is already significant: he ennobles many of them, and thus balances the number of nobles who owe him military service, at their own expense. This favoring of the middle class will be one of his cardinal principles.

Years afterwards Commynes observed that his master had had very few days of happiness in his life. It is permissible to believe that these ten years in Dauphiny were the sunniest memories Louis retained. It is true that he wanted more than Dauphiny. He wanted France. But in the meantime, being forced to wait, he was doing the work he most loved. His power was absolute. He could watch chaos giving place to order under his eye, and feel the reins in his own hand. He was a sovereign, and could exercise his skill in rule against the day when France should be his. He gave his orders, and was obeyed, and at the same time that he rode about Dauphiny he was in constant touch with the affairs of France; for it seems hardly necessary to observe that he had his own means of knowing what went on at Court.[3] He was certainly happy in Dauphiny. He plunged with equal zest from business into his lifelong passion of the chase; the game laws of the forests of Dauphiny were strictly regulated, and no hunting could be done without authorization. Here, too, Louis indulged, so far as he was capable, in what was never a ruling passion with him—the love of women. He had two known mistresses, one of whom bore him two children; but he was not the man to let any woman assume any importance whatsoever in his life. (One may imagine the contempt which curled his lip when he spoke of Agnes Sorel and his father.) Guyette Durand of Grenoble and Noble Félise Reynard of Die shared his bed but nothing else of his, and it is to be noted that he even made his bastards serve a political end by marriage. Such a man cannot have been the ideal lover.

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[3] Thomas Basin says that Louis had spies in his father's house.

It is necessary to picture Louis, therefore, during these last years of his apprenticeship, as devoting himself strictly to the work of ruling Dauphiny in preparation for something greater; and, at the same time, as holding in his fingers, far away from the Court of France, the threads of obscure intrigues. He made no secret of his ultimate intentions regarding his father. Into the murky business of this period enters the Duke of Burgundy, conveying to Louis his opinion that he, Louis, the man of affairs, should be at the helm of France, and that his father should be in a hermitage. The sudden death of Agnes Sorel in 1450 and the trial of the great financier Jacques Coeur, accused of having had her poisoned, is considered by M. Champion to point to some plot of Louis' against the King, financed by Jacques Coeur—for Charles considered the banker guilty of a conspiracy against his person. It seems probable, indeed, that the financier, like others, had been backing the stronger force to win. Jacques Coeur would have had as little conscience in such a matter as conspiring against his king as Amschel-Rothschild had when he laid the foundation of his fortune by spreading advance lies in London about the result of Waterloo. All this underground work was shortly to result in a fresh break between Charles and his son, in flight, and finally in the attainment of Louis' daring ambition.

Louis' neighbor was the powerful Duke of Savoy, with whom he had concluded a valuable treaty in 1446, and again in 1449, providing for the reciprocal encouragement of trade, alliance against outside enemies, and the amicable arrangement of all inter-State difficulties. "A thoroughly modern treaty," remarks M. Champion, "as modern as the man who elaborated it." But Louis had further plans. The Duke of Savoy had a daughter, Charlotte, aged eleven, whom Louis had determined to marry. Charles, to whom he politely enough submitted this project, was against it, although Louis' envoys pleaded the necessity for an heir and emphasized the large dowry (some 400,000 crowns) which the marriage would bring. Charles dallied and temporized, observing that a marriage with the daughter of the Duke of Buckingham, Eleanor of Portugal, or the sister of the King of Hungary would be more serviceable. Louis, pleading his poverty, had also asked for the government of Guyenne; this Charles rejected. Louis, indeed, had had his eye on the rich province of Normandy, and had tried to enlist the services of Thomas Basin, Bishop of Lisieux, the historian, to assist this project; but Basin reported the matter to the King, and thereby made a lifelong enemy.

The problem of the Savoy marriage was solved in the simplest manner by Louis in February 1451, when his marriage took place at Chambéry, Charles VII's envoy, the King-at-Arms Normandy, being very neatly fooled by Louis and his people, who amused themselves by putting him off the scent. At the news of the marriage Charles aroused himself from his lethargy and broke into fury. The disobedient son had added one more disobedience to his long list. And Charles drew up a manifesto setting forth fourteen reasons whereby a father can disinherit his son, pointing out that Louis' conduct came under seven of these. Louis, who immediately after his marriage had diverted himself by plunging lightly but enjoyably into the confused tangle of Italian politics—he contemplated a joint expedition with Louis of Savoy into Italy to assist Sforza against the Venetians: the situation is too confused to admit of clarification here—replied to the paternal thunders with defiance, renewing relations with the Duke of Burgundy, with Alençon, and others. He prepares active resistance, and then, as Charles makes a move heralding serious military preparation to bring him to heel, suddenly takes alarm and makes humble, almost abject promises of surrender. Let the King but give him a safe-conduct for himself and his court, and he will renounce all his projects and alliances and serve his father faithfully. And then, probably aware that Charles places no particular faith in his promises, Louis, suddenly overcome with panic, takes horse and gallops into the territory of Burgundy, where he will be safe from his father's anger.

There is a letter which Louis wrote to his father during this journey. It explains that he, Louis, is taking refuge with the *bel oncle* in order that Burgundy may intercede for him and obtain for him his father's good grace—"which is the thing I desire most in this world." He adds that Burgundy is meditating a crusade against the Turk for the defense of the Catholic Faith: a thing which was frequently in Burgundy's mind. He says that he, Louis, will accompany him. Meanwhile he places more and more distance between himself and his father, riding hard into Flanders by way of Lorraine and Luxembourg in a sweat of fear. At Namur the tired horses give in. At Louvain, reached in September 1456, Louis draws a breath of relief. At Brussels the Duchess Isabel of Burgundy and her daughter-in-law receive him, in the absence of the Duke in Holland, with low reverences. Philip the Good himself arrives shortly to greet his embarrassing guest, who is all courtesy and grace. The château of Genappe, near Brussels, is lent to Louis for his residence, with an allowance of 36,000 francs.

It is a piquant situation, this of Louis as the guest of the greateſt rival of his House. There is an observation attributed to Charles VII which, whether authentic or not, sums up the position perfectly. "Burgundy is entertaining the fox who may devour his poultry." [4] It is not difficult to perceive Philip's gueſt, amid the pleasures of Hesdin, the sweet country air, the hunting, the banquets, the merry company which gave birth to the *Cent Nouvelles nouvelles,* amid, too, the deferential courtesies which Philip extended him and his suite—it is not difficult to see Louis' sardonic eyes contemplating his hoſt, contemplating his household, with its magnificence and its domeſtic quarrels, contemplating the wealth of Burgundy, and, when he is alone, blinking with appreciation of the situation. For our dear uncle of Burgundy thinks he is about to hold us; whereas, *Pasque Dieu!* it is we who, all in good time, will hold our dear uncle of Burgundy.

Meanwhile all is courtesy and affection. Louis hunts to his heart's content and rides with the Duke through the rich Flemish cities, whose dignified burgesses, in their silks and furs, entertain him with banquets and miſteries: the many-colored buſtle of their ſtreets, the sober splendor of their houses, the magnificence of their churches, like the pictures of the Van Eycks and Van der Weyden come to life, are a new experience to eyes accuſtomed to French poverty. Some semblance of what Louis saw in Flanders may ſtill be seen to-day when once a year, each April, Bruges wakes to life for the famous Procession of the Holy Blood, in which Louis and Burgundy doubtless took part. Everywhere in Flanders the gueſt of Burgundy is fêted and honored; our dear uncle is paternal in his kindness and solicitude; our dear uncle's son and heir Charles, Comte de Charolais, though a romantic young hot-head, is our very dear friend and constant companion. (Before many years are out he will with the greatest difficulty be prevented from putting us to a violent death in the old tower of Péronne.) And Louis, having been godfather to Charolais' infant daughter, sends for his own wife, the plain little Charlotte of Savoy, who is now of canonical age, and she too becomes the guest of Burgundy, such is our dear uncle's generous hospitality. In July 1459 a child is born at Genappe to Louis and Charlotte, and Louis makes a pilgrimage of thanks to the still notable shrine of Our Lady of Hal. The child's gossips are Burgundy and Madame de Charolais; the presents are magnificent—gold and silver plate, a great silver and crystal *nef,* precious hangings. The child, Monsieur Joachim de France, dies four months after. Two years later Charlotte bears a daughter, Anne, who will become Regent of France after her father's death.

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[4] Another version makes the direct prophecy—a prophecy, observes the learned Benedictine of Dijon who compiled a massive *Hiſtory of Burgundy* in the 18th century, probably made after the event.

At the Court of France Charles VII, aging rapidly and more and more in the hands of his women, continues to be the disobeyed and angry father, despite the rare tact and frank courtesy of the Duke of Burgundy, who explains to Charles' ambassadors that Louis, his guest, is free to come and go as he pleases, and that he, Burgundy, has received him solely for the honor he bears the House of France. Charles (Antoinette de Villequier now reigning Sultana, *vice* her aunt Agnes Sorel, deceased) is plunged in obscure political intrigues and in pleasure; more than ever the ancient beau, he has taken to gay clothes. The situation between father and son remains constant: to and fro go the ambassadors, bearing the same embittered remonstrances from the father, the same submissive and humble replies from the son. But nothing is done.

Charles, just as he is apparently about to undertake some bewildering new policy which seems likely to embroil him with Burgundy, is taken ill in the summer of 1460. Louis' spies inform him of this; the guest of Burgundy begins to fume with impatience for the end. At the Court of France all is unease and suspicion. Charles is shown a letter of Louis', returning thanks for information, and becomes alarmed. Is he surrounded by traitors? He suffers from a painful abscess in the mouth, and his thoughts fly instantly to poison. Is not such an undutiful son capable of hastening his father's end? Such a thought is unjust to Louis; but Charles feels himself surrounded by enemies. One of his doctors is sent to prison, another takes flight; it is unsafe to expose oneself to the least suspicion of tampering with the King's medicine. In July the Council send a message to Louis advising him to hold himself ready; and Louis eagerly takes leave of his host and sets out for Avesnes, on the road to Rheims, the city of coronation. "If," he writes to the Duke of Burgundy from Avesnes, "you have news of his death, we pray you to take horse immediately and come with all your people to us, on the way to Rheims." Charles VII, meanwhile, is sinking fast. He refuses all food, except a little from the hands of the only man he trusts, the Comte de Foix. On the 22nd of July he rouses and asks, "What day is it?"

"Sire," answers a monk at his bedside, "it is the day of the glorious Magdalen."

"Ah," murmurs the dying king, "I praise God and thank Him that it has pleased Him to allow the greatest sinner in this world to die on that Sinner's feast." After which he confesses and receives the Last Sacraments, commending his son Charles, the *petit seigneur,* Louis' younger brother,[5] to the care of Chabannes, Comte de Dammartin. Chabannes begs him to take a little food, adding that if he suspects any one at Court of any foul play, the man shall be tried, and—tough and hearty soldier!—torn to pieces by four horses. But Charles answers

[5] Born December 1446.

him: "I leave the vengeance for my death to Almighty God," and passes. His age is fifty-eight.

One may conceive the impatience of Louis, champing his bit at Avesnes during these last days and waiting for the courier. His eagerness to hear of his father's death is indecent but sincere. He has been for years at daggers drawn with his father, and he has no false tears to shed at the removal of an enemy and an obstacle. At last he is about to grasp what he has dreamed of and worked for since boyhood. As soon as Burgundy catches him up the march to Rheims may begin; and Burgundy, who has his own roseate dreams of the future, now his dear guest and nephew is King of France, hastens to assemble his knights, his treasure-wagons, and his army. Louis waits a little longer at Avesnes, impatiently enough, but he has already begun to make his hand felt. Deputations of loyal citizens are received; the Great Seal is affixed to one or two documents; a number of high offices are taken from Charles's men and given to Louis'—among them, notably, that of Admiral of France, in which office the Seigneur de Montauban displaces the great soldier Jehan de Bueil, and the Provostship of Paris, in which Robert d'Estouteville, the protector of François Villon, gives way to the Seigneur de l'Isle Adam, who will in 1462 all but hang the blackguard poet. On August 3rd, the Archbishop of Bourges sings a requiem Mass in the church of Avesnes for the soul of the dead King; Louis and his suite, wearing black for the first time (though the chivalrous Burgundy has been in mourning many days) are present. It is one or two days after the funeral of Charles at St. Denis, with its customary solemn pomp and, after the interment, the loud cry of the herald proclaiming King Louis.

And now Louis, fuming and fretting at the delay, will wait no longer for our dear uncle, but spurs off on the way to

Rheims, leaving his queen to follow as she may. She is forced to borrow horses and carriages from the Comtesse de Charolais. Louis, holding straight for Rheims, stops at St. Thierry, just outside the walls, whence he dictates a brief letter—his first letter as King—to the Archbishop of Rheims, Jehan Jouvenel des Ursins, ordering everything to be ready for the coronation by the following Saturday. The letter is laconic and sharp. "Give orders that all is to be prepared, and this without fail." And then, as Philip and his Burgundians enter St. Thierry, Louis mounts his horse again. It is time to be entering the city.

§ 3

From the glittering pages of Georges Chastellain, the Burgundian, whom his contemporaries called the Pearl and Star of Historians, who was an eyewitness, I take the description of the august mysteries, *hauts et singulieres mistères,* which followed. What lay beneath these symbols, the sacramental meaning of the French Monarchy, may best be stated in words of Mr. Hilaire Belloc applied to the kingship of the last of this long Capetian line: "That monarchy which the Gaulish energy had drawn out of the stuff of old Rome was . . . a sacramental alliance between an Idea and a Thing. The *Idea* was that of the Gallic formula 'without authority there is no life'—for authority is authorship: this Gallic formula also sustains the Faith. The *Thing* was one lineage of actual living men: devoted from father to son—sacrificed almost as in a public sacrifice—condemned to the perpetual burden of being mixed into this idea and of supporting the burden of its intensity and power. There had descended from the Merovingian and the

Carolingian families to the Capetian, bearing a power that increased with every century, the conception of a creative Executive made flesh; an Executive that should reside in the living matter of a family of men who should be seen, known, touched, loved, or hated; who should rapidly pronounce new and necessary laws, actively preserve the yet more necessary body of ancient and fundamental custom, observe in public the religion of the community, and, above all, lead in battle. . . . This institution had now endured for much more than a thousand years. It had grown old, as must all human institutions that have no direct sustenance from forces outside time; but even so it maintained a mysterious vitality. Its Kings were anointed. It held a sort of compact with the Divine." [6]

At seven o'clock of an August evening Louis made his entry into Rheims, escorted by the archers and torches of Burgundy. For the occasion he had made himself splendid. His clothes, and those of his suite, were of red and white satin. On his head was a bonnet of cramoisy velvet. He bestrode a horse covered with cloth of gold. A canopy was held above him, and after him rode the Duke of Burgundy. They reined in at the Cathedral, and Louis dismounted, entered, prayed briefly, and rode on to the palace. At midnight, attended by a small company, he left his chamber and went to the Cathedral for Matins; and having prayed till the dawn he confessed and communicated. At five o'clock he returned to the palace, and slept until his servants aroused him at eight for the Coronation.

At four hundred years' distance the eye is dazzled and the ear confused by the echoing clamor and splendor of that morning. In the clear August sunshine all the bells of Rheims are clashing. The streets are a kaleidoscope of swiftly melting colors, resounding to the clatter of hoofs, the words of command, the marching of troops, the buzz of the holiday crowd. Before nine the King-elect comes to the Cathedral, enters the choir, and resumes his prayers before the high altar. Meanwhile outside the great west door the Peers are assembling, headed by Burgundy in a dress of cloth of gold blazing with jewels. The crush is tremendous. Suddenly a fanfare of trumpets in the street announces the arrival of the Holy Ampulla, the Oil of Sacring, carried by the Abbot of St. Rémy on horseback. The King hastens from the choir down the nave and falls on his knees as the west door is flung open. The Bishop of Laon raises him, and the Ampulla is carried in procession to the high altar, where Louis, having reverently touched it with his lips, once more falls on his knees and remains there in prayer—or perhaps meditation. *"Longuement,"* says Chastellain, *"se contint à genoux, faisant oraison très devote par semblant."*

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[6] "Marie Antoinette," Chap. VI.

He rises, and the long-drawn solemn mysteries begin. Burgundy, followed by Bourbon, Nevers, Dunois, and others of the Peers of France, advances. Louis, the solemn oaths being taken and *Te Deum* sung, is escorted behind a screen of tapestry in the choir and stripped to the waist. They take him back to the high altar, before which he prostrates himself; and the Archbishop of Rheims, advancing from the cluster of prelates vested in cloth of gold and jewels, removes the Ampulla from the altar and hands it to the Bishop of Laon, who extracts from it with a gold spatula what is required of the sacred Oil, mingles it on a gold paten with the Oil of Chrism, and begins the Anointing: on the forehead, the eyes, the mouth, the shoulders, the arms, the navel, and the trunk, in the shape of a cross. The Ampulla is replaced on the high altar, and while the prayers continue the Peers begin ceremonially to vest the King. First comes a shirt of rose-colored silk, then the doublet, the sur-coat, and the *habit royal* of azure; and over these the royal sacerdotal robes of coronation, powdered with golden fleur delys. They lead him, gloved, golden-spurred, wearing the Ring and Sword and carrying the Scepter, to a throne placed on a high dais, and the Duke of Burgundy, First Peer of France, places a light velvet bonnet on his head. And then, taking the *precieuse et riche* crown, Burgundy raises it high in both hands for it to be seen by the populace, like a priest elevating the Host, holds it poised a moment over the head of Louis, and places it gently on his head, crying in a loud voice: *"Vive le Roy! Montjoye Saint-Denis!"*

He is answered by a roar from the crowded cathedral: *"Vive le Roy! Noël! Noël!"* and by a silver crash of trumpets and a dizzying storm of bells, till the whole world seems to quiver and rock. All ears are deafened, says Chastellain.

There follows in due order the High Mass of Coronation, amid a blaze of wax-lights and incense-clouds and the flashing of jewels as the officiants in their festal vestments move to and fro, the rolling organs and the clear voices of singing-boys answering the glad chaunt of the Liturgy from the high altar. At the Offertory the King makes his offering. At the Elevation of the Host, as previously at the Gospel, his crown, as he kneels, is doffed by Burgundy. And when at length the deacon's long plainsong cry of *"Ite, missa est"* echoing down the vast nave brings the Mass to its end, Louis descends from his throne and goes to the steps of the high altar, and there creates three hundred knights; a ceremony of which Chastellain says that to tell all the names would be sheer boredom—*dont le nombre donroit annuy.*

At high noon Louis returned to the palace for the banquet, presiding at the high table and for comfort's sake removing the crown, which he placed by him on the table. The massy gold and silver plate was lent by Burgundy. The King, taking his ease after the morning's fatigue, chatted familiarly through the meal with merry Messire Philippe Pot, one of his friends of Genappe and of the *Cent Nouvelles nouvelles*. Before the evening of that same day he had left Rheims. The Oath sworn at coronation a few hours before bound him to unite in one kingdom all its parts, whether intact or alienated. It may (observes P. Champion) have been the customary oath, but Louis read new significance into it, and he was ever scrupulous in the matter of oaths.

He is now hard on the road to Saint-Thierry. The pomp and the trappings are left behind. Already, before taking horse, he has given a characteristic reply to the magistrates of Rheims, who have waited on him to pay homage and complain of distress and taxation. Their distress, Louis answers drily, is due to the absence of commerce and industry in their town; and he suggests to their notice the opulent cities of Flanders. And he goes his way to Paris.

His work has begun.

4

THE CRAFTSMAN, 1461-1483

§ 1

Sans nulle doubte c'estoit ung des plus saiges princes et des plus subtilz qui ait regné en son temps.

Il est bon à penser qu'il n'est nul prince si saige qu'il ne faille bien aucunesfois, et bien souvent s'il a longue vie.

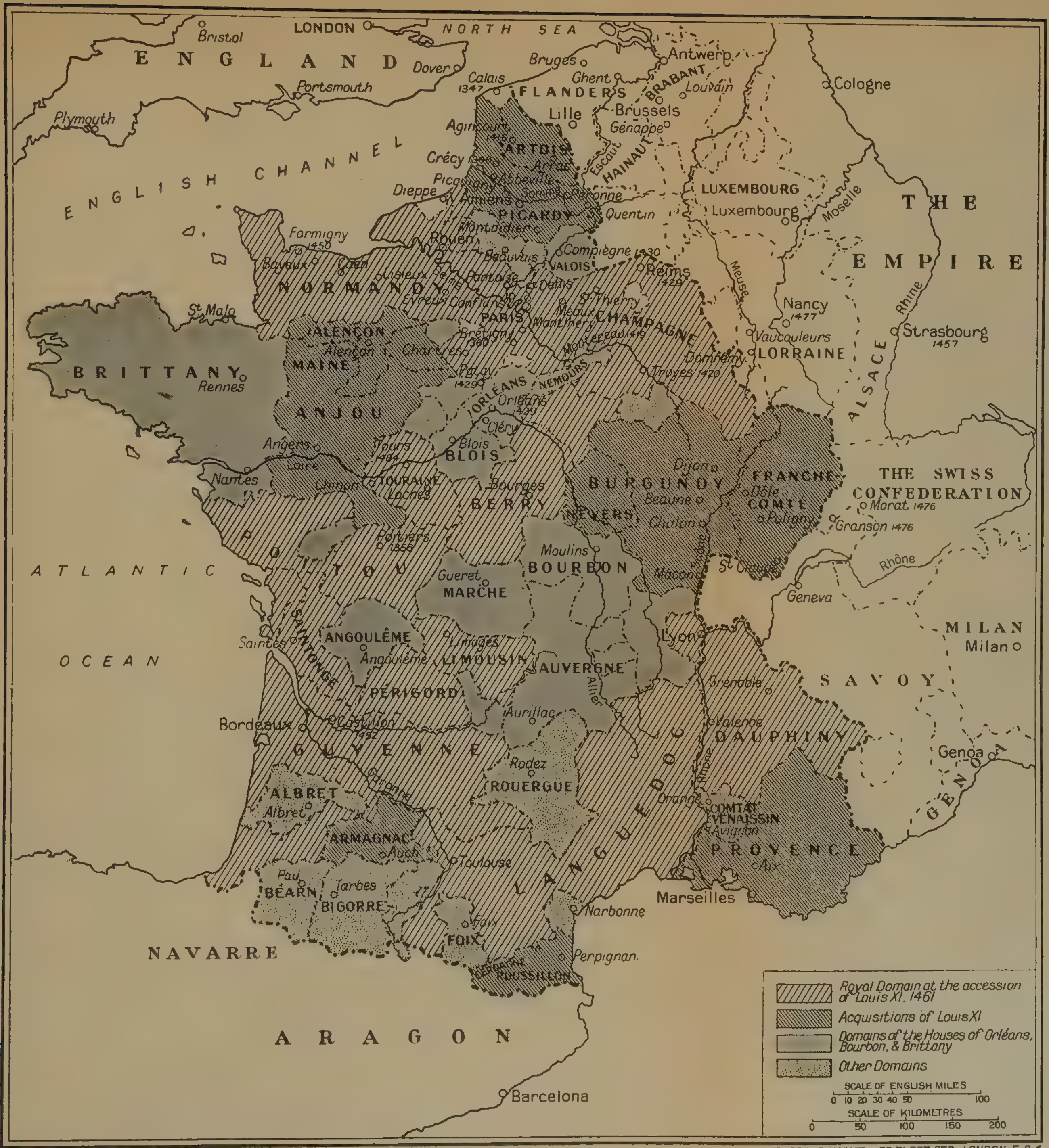
—*Philippe de Commynes.*

Without any doubt he was one of the wisest princes, and the subtlest, of his age.

It is a good thing to reflect that there is no prince so wise that he does not fail badly sometimes, and very often if he lives a long life.

Louis XI ascended the throne at the age of thirty-eight. In most of the liberal professions a man at this age is proficient and assured. It has not always been so with the profession of kingship, yet in this instance there can be no doubt. A man better equipped by intelligence, temperament, and experience to rule a nation has never ascended any throne.

"In my opinion," reflects Commynes, "what he did in his youth, when he was a fugitive from his father under the Duke of Burgundy, where he remained six years, was very valuable


Bristol
LONDON
NORTH SEA
ENGLAND
Dover
Portsmouth
Plymouth
Calais 1347
Bruges
Ghent
Antwerp
BRABANT
Louvain
Cologne
FLANDERS
Lille
Brussels
Genappe
Agincourt 1415
ARTOIS
Arras
Crécy 1346
Escaut
HAINAUT
ENGLISH CHANNEL
Dieppe
Picquigny
Abbeville
Somme
Péronne
Amiens
PICARDY
St Quentin
LUXEMBOURG
Luxembourg
Moselle
THE EMPIRE
Formigny 1450
Montdidier
Rouen
Compiègne 1430
Beauvais
VALOIS
Reims 1429
Bayeux
Caen
Lisieux
Seine
Pontoise
St Denis
NORMANDY
Evreux
Conflans
St Thierry
Meaux
Meuse
Nancy 1477
Rhine
St Malo
PARIS
Montlhery
CHAMPAGNE
Strasbourg 1457
ALENÇON
Alençon
Chartres
Bretigny 1360
Montereau 1419
Vaucouleurs
LORRAINE
BRITTANY
Rennes
MAINE
Patay 1429
NEMOURS
Domremy
Troyes 1420
ALSACE
ORLÉANS
Orléans 1429
ANJOU
Cléry
Angers
Tours 1484
Blois
BLOIS
Loire
Nantes
Chinon
TOURAINE
Loches
Bourges
BERRY
Dijon
BURGUNDY
Beaune
FRANCHE COMTÉ
Dôle
Poligny
THE SWISS CONFEDERATION
Morat 1476
Granson 1476
NEVERS
Chalon
POITOU
Poitiers 1356
Moulins
BOURBON
Saône
Macon
St Claude
Rhône
ATLANTIC
Gueret
MARCHE
Geneva
OCEAN
ANGOULÊME
Angoulême
Saintes
SAINTONGE
Limoges
LIMOUSIN
AUVERGNE
Allier
Lyon
MILAN
Milan
PÉRIGORD
Grenoble
SAVOY
Bordeaux
Castillon 1453
Aurillac
Valence
DAUPHINY
GUYENNE
Rodez
ROUERGUE
Genoa
GENOA
ALBRET
Albret
Garonne
LANGUEDOC
Orange
COMTAT VENAISSIN
Avignon
ARMAGNAC
Auch
Toulouse
PROVENCE
Aix
Pau
BÉARN
Tarbes
BIGORRE
Marseilles
Narbonne
Foix
FOIX
NAVARRE
Perpignan
CERDAGNE
ROUSSILLON
ARAGON
Barcelona
▨ Royal Domain at the accession of Louis XI. 1461
▨ Acquisitions of Louis XI
▨ Domains of the Houses of Orléans, Bourbon, & Brittany
▨ Other Domains
SCALE OF ENGLISH MILES
0 10 20 30 40 50 100
SCALE OF KILOMETRES
0 50 100 150 200

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MAP OF FRANCE AT THE DEATH OF LOUIS XI, 1483

to him, for he was compelled to please those of whom he had need, and this benefit (which is not small) taught him the meaning of Adversity." The admirable Commynes! If some of his successors in the trade of history could probe as accurately into the minds of men!

Louis XI's reign is a maze of shifting sands, hidden reefs, and twisting channels through which the hand of a master steers the vessel of France with consummate address and the extreme minimum of blunders. To appreciate one single aspect of Louis' task one need but consider again the array of feudal nobles, nearly all of royal blood, whom he found arrayed against him on his accession, and whom he conquered, absorbed, or nullified by force or subtlety. Heading them is the House of Burgundy, at the moment his sponsor, very soon his greatest enemy; then come the House of Bourbon, the House of Brittany, the Houses of Lorraine, Artois, Alençon, Armagnac, Anjou. With these are the lesser southern houses, Foix and Albret, and, hovering in the rear, Luxembourg and Navarre. Four years after his accession the first great feudal storm breaks on him—that coalition of five hundred princes and chevaliers headed by Burgundy and called (with some irony) the League of the Public Weal. To this storm, since there is nothing else Louis can do at the moment, he bows, is forced to submit to discomfiture and loss, and before long recovers all. It is part of his strength that when the situation calls for it he can be utterly pliant, can submit to temporary humiliation for the sake of future gain. It is also part of his strength that he uses money not for luxury but for politics. The peace treaty with the English signed at Picquigny in 1475 (which proceedings involve a scene of rich Rabelaisian comedy which shall be touched on in its proper place) costs Louis 75,000 gold crowns of indemnity and an annuity of 50,000. He signs the bill with pleasure. He rubs his hands, laughs, cracks jokes with Edward IV of England. He has got the English out of France for seven good years.

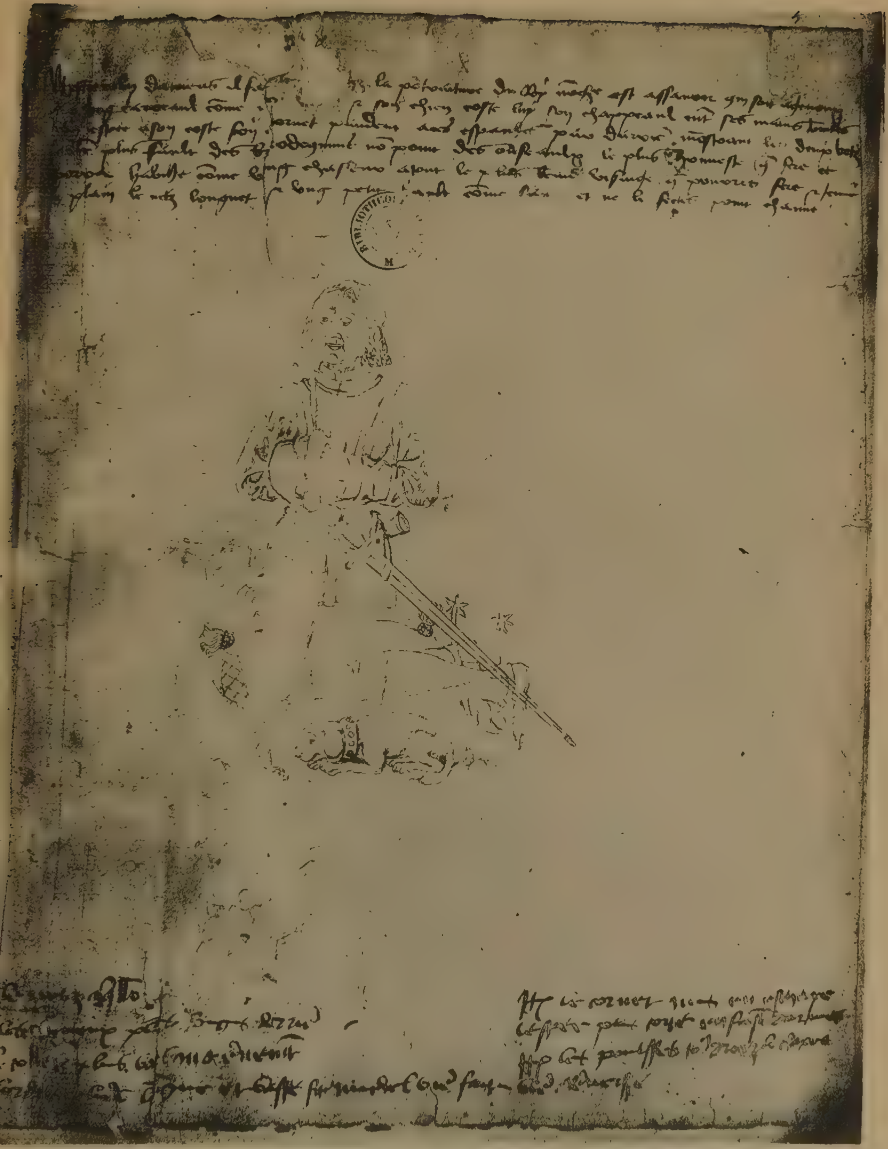
It is the purpose of what follows not to attempt the maze of Louis' achievements in detail, but to select a few of the stiffer problems he faced and solved, by one means or another. First of all it may be as well to attempt a portrait of the man.

§ 2

The portrait of Louis XI which forms a frontispiece to this book is attributed to Colin d'Amiens, one of the artists responsible for the original royal tomb at Cléry. It is not absolutely guaranteed authentic, and indeed none such exists. There is another portrait at Béhuard, a shrine of Our Lady to which Louis had a devotion; but this is a work of the sixteenth century. In the Cabinet of Medals of the National Library in Paris is a medal by Francesco Laurana bearing Louis' name and effigy; possibly this, which bears little resemblance to either of the other two portraits, except in the emphasis on the long, sharp nose which was Louis' distinguishing feature, is as accurate as either. The portrait of Louis made by his own painter Jehan Fouquet, the greatest French artist of the period, no longer exists; one of the presumed copies of it, made by Gaignières in the seventeenth century, is now in New York. Probably the portrait attributed to Colin d'Amiens, which at least bears all the marks of contemporary work, may be accepted as conforming most to the original, so far as can be gathered from the personal descriptions of Louis available. George the Fourth of England spent a long and useful life in eating, drinking, and being painted in every conceivable fancy costume; Louis the Eleventh of France had other preoccupations. It may be assumed that one so careless of millinery was equally careless about portraiture, although Bourré's annotations to Colin d'Amiens' sketch for the King's figure, to be cast in bronze for the tomb at Cléry, bear every mark of royal instruction. "The nose aquiline. The hair longer behind. The collar lower all round, and the Order (of St. Michael) well done." Evidently Louis' desire is to kneel throughout the centuries before his Patroness with his homely features improved as far as possible. The supposed portrait by Colin d'Amiens certainly does not flatter him—the sidelong cunning expression of the eyes, especially, is everything his worst enemies could have ordered—and it would be interesting, if it were possible, to see a De Laszlo portrait by the side of it, in all the courtly suavity of the modern painter's best manner, combining no doubt all that is most impressive and spiritual in the expressions of Sir Galahad and Mr. Henry Ford.

The King is not prepossessing. The long ugly nose, inherited from his father, goes with a pair of oblique eyes too deeply set, thin lips, a powerful jaw—how powerful may still be seen in the crypt at Cléry—and a jutting chin. His hair must generally have been worn short, judging from Bourré's note. He is under middle height, slightly stout towards middle age, and later bald, and his legs are noticeably meager; but for all that he wears for preference the short jacket in the Italian manner when all the world wears long gowns. A great deal of melodrama has centered round Louis' taste in hats; the kind he ordered for himself may be seen described in detail in a letter in a later page of this book; it is of fur, very large brimmed, and so contrived as to shelter the King when on horseback from sun and rain, "like a little house." In Laurana's medal and in the portrait of Colin d'Amiens and elsewhere he is shown wearing a smallish conical hat, and it is this which looms in such a sinister manner in the pages of Hugo and the romanticists, the hat with the cheap leaden figure attached to the brim; the mystery about which figure, or figures—for it seems likely that there were two or three, attached to each other by a silken thread—may be examined and dismissed at once. Such a thing was merely a token of pilgrimage to a shrine, a little image of the Blessed Virgin or some saint, sold there for a couple of pence to pilgrims of every kind; nor did any occult virtue attach to it, beyond its significance as a memento. Louis XI, who paid more visits to the shrines of France than can be set down here, often wore on such occasions the garb of the ordinary pilgrim, a habit of coarse gray or brown stuff; and like the ordinary pilgrim he would bring back a token or two which cost nothing in particular. Hugo's picture of Louis praying to his hat, even if it were authentic, would resolve itself into nothing more eccentric than this, that although it is an ordinary act of Catholic devotion to say one's prayers with a sacred image or picture before the eyes, such prayers are directed elsewhere.

The royal accounts in the national Archives show that the King pushed economy in dress to extremes. Fustian and serge are his favorite materials, black, gray, and brown his favorite colors. On rare occasions he assumes more splendid costumes, but only for a sound reason; for example, at his coronation, at the meeting of Picquigny, and in the last phases of his indomitable old age, to discountenance rumors that he is breaking up. He is nevertheless particular, as has been already observed, about his linen, and his shirts are of fine Holland; and it seems necessary to emphasize the fact that he is particular about personal hygiene. The Parisians' addiction to hot baths



Instructions issued in 1482 by Jehan Bourré to Colin d'Amiens for the designing of the Bronze Statue of Louis XI to be placed on the Royal Tomb at Cléry

has been touched on. Louis himself had the same predilection: the royal accounts show that in his room at Plessis, during the last phase, there was a bath with heating apparatus. His regular daily use of rosewater at the toilet and during meals was likewise common to the age. During his last years, as the royal accounts show in many places, powdered violets [1] are largely sprinkled among the gowns in his wardrobe—his successors will continue this habit, and violets will be for long the perfume of the Kings of France—and in his last sickness his room is strewn with fresh roses, marjoram, rosemary, thyme, hawthorn, honeysuckle, and fragrant green herbs.

One other modern superstition receives a heavy blow from this remarkable man—the superstition of the essential silence of the Strong Man, the fearful type which dominates and is worshiped sacramentally by the Nordic Man. Louis, God knows, approaches as nearly to the Nietzschean Superman as one could wish, or not wish; but he is a ceaseless talker. "I know very well," he admits one day to Commynes, "that my tongue has done me a great deal of harm. On the other hand it has sometimes given me great pleasure; it is only just that I should pay the penalty." His enemy Thomas Basin, Bishop of Lisieux, describes him as an incorrigible babbler, and on one occasion he tries the patience of ambassadors by a monologue of some two hours; but his perpetual stream of talk is not aimless. "No man," says the invaluable Commynes, "ever listened more constantly, or sought information on so many subjects as he, or sought to know so many people. . . . And his memory was so perfect that he retained everything."

There is also the testimony of Louis himself in a letter to Olivier de Coétivy: "Brother, I am like a woman—when anyone tells me anything in an obscure manner I muſt know at once what it is all about."

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[1] From the accounts of Alexandre Sexte, royal treasurer: "To Jehan Hurle, apothecary, the sum of 55 sols Tournois for a pound of powdered violets to be sprinkled among the gowns and other clothing of my said lord." (Arch. Nat., KK 60.)

So one muſt imagine him, going up and down France, asking perpetual queſtions of every kind of man, getting to the root of every kind of myſtery, eternally probing, eternally assimilating facts once and for all, eternally talking; and this not only on his journeys but during his walks, during his hunting, at table, among his friends and servants. He possesses, and exercises to the full when necessary, a considerable charm of voice and manner. His French is exceedingly pure and his words well chosen, and the Burgundian poet Molinet, who hated him, is compelled to write that the sweetness of his voice is as beguiling as that of the Sirens. Not unreasonably, Louis does not encourage these gifts in others. When the King asks questions one muſt not be long-winded; one muſt be brief, lucid, and frank. *"Parlez brievement,"* is his perpetual order. When Jouvenel des Ursins, Bishop of Rheims, is reciting a loyal address from the citizens on the eve of the coronation, Louis issues this peremptory order three diſtinct times. An interview with him cannot have been an unmixed pleasure, with the sharp eyes boring into one's brain, the shrewd mind weighing one's every word, the sharp voice interrupting. . . .

Yet, for all that he is despotic, using men as inſtruments and demanding inſtant and explicit obedience, he is, on occasion, too wise (and has too much breeding) to bully honorable men who in some matter of importance may be conscientiously and courageously opposed to his will. One day he sends to the Parliament, to be regiſtered and put into action, an edict imposing heavy new taxes.[2] In a day or two a delegation of the

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[2] His taxation may be briefly dealt with here and dismissed. He nearly quadrupled the *taille*, the general tax made permanent by Charles VII, raising it from 1,200,000 livres to 4,700,000. His other taxation was also oppressive, but alleviated by regular and exact collection and juſtified by the great expansion of

High Court of Parliament is admitted into his presence, headed by the First President. "Sir," says the First President, holding out the edict, "we have come to resign our charge into your hands, and are ready to suffer what you will, rather than offend our consciences."

Louis looks at them a moment with his keen gaze, then replies that he is overjoyed to think he has such magistrates, and puts his edict back into his pocket.

That is a positively comic moment when the University of Paris sends a deputation of doctors, after the abrogation of the Pragmatic Sanction, to beg the King to intervene with the Holy See in behalf of certain benefices which the University desires to reserve to itself. Louis—one sees the baleful eyes fixing the speaker—suddenly loses control and bursts out: *"Par la Pasque Dieu!* I will do nothing of the sort! You are a bad lot, a set of loose livers, with the great fat whores (*grosses grasses ribaudes*) you keep among you! Get out of it! You are not worth the trouble." One sees the discomfited procession of long black gowns stumbling hastily out of the terrible presence, and the barely concealed grins on the faces of the royal flunkeys; one hears the jeers and laughter that night in all the taverns of the Left Bank.

Louis' tastes are severely plain. The Italian diplomat Cagnola has left a perfect vignette in one of his despatches, recording, with amazement, that he has seen the King of France eating his breakfast after Mass in a tavern, at the sign of Saint Michael in the market-place of Tours, like any common man. The King's taste in men is the same. His chosen friends, his intimates, his counsellors, are of the middle class: Jehan Bourré,

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commerce due to his fiscal and economic policy. At the same time the feudal charges, which had been heavy, were diminished or abolished. Nevertheless in the first years of Louis' reign there were half a dozen revolts against taxation, all sternly repressed; and then no more. *"On s'y accoutume,"* as the Marquise said of her husband's habit of lowing like a calf.

Monseigneur du Plessis, his *homme de toute confiance,* is the type, as is also Pierre Doriole, his chancellor, and Olivier le Mauvais, the barber-surgeon, later ennobled and employed in more than one delicate mission. Another of the middle class, Dr. Adam Fumée, seigneur des Roches Saint-Quentin, physician to Charles VII and to Louis XI (and later to Charles VIII) is Louis' ambassador to the Holy See, governor of Nantes, Keeper of the Seals, and Master of Requests. In his perpetual traveling Louis lodges for choice with the middle class also, with town-councilors, canons, aldermen, minor officials. With these he is at his ease, laughs and jests at their tables, drinks joyously—he loves the fine wines of France, and esteems them, like the dying Christian sage La Boëtie and other great and good men, to be the best drink in the world,[3] but he does not drink them to excess, as Thomas Basin hatefully declares—tweaks their ears, talks familiarly. Apart from his personal preferences, it is part of his settled policy to favor and ennoble the wealthy, solid burgess class which will take the place in the kingdom of the discredited and ruined nobility.

"I think," says Commynes in a notable passage, "that if all the good days he enjoyed during his life, days in which he had more pleasure and happiness than hard work and trouble, were carefully numbered, they would be found to be few; I believe one would find twenty of worry and travail for one of ease and pleasure."

There can be no contradicting Commynes when he sounds an intimate note. Louis has practically only one relaxation—if that can be called a relaxation to which he devotes himself, in the hours snatched from business, with a sort of fury. This passion of his is hunting. He is perpetually surrounded with sporting dogs of every breed, and foreign kings and ambassadors know well that no gift is likely to be so welcome. Sometimes when he descends on some provincial burgess for a night's lodging there are discreet complaints about the number and behavior of the dogs which accompany him. There is another vignette of the period in the archives of the city of Tours: the King, hunting at Christmas time in the woods of Marmoutier, outside the walls, loses his favorite greyhound bitch, and orders the Mayor of Tours to have the loss announced to the citizens at midnight Mass. His anxiety concerning certain dogs bequeathed him by the Queen of England is illustrated in a letter quoted elsewhere in this book. When a favorite hound, "Paris," "Artus," "Chier-Amy," or another is ill, the King will make a votive offering in his behalf to St. Hubert, patron of huntsmen, to whom all medieval sportsmen had a devotion, and on whose feast day there is still kept up today, at the country house of the Duchesse d'Uzès, the ancient ceremony of the blessing of the pack after the Mass of St. Hubert.

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[3] "My dear brother," said La Boëtie to Montaigne, having drunk a little wine just before his death, "What good and comforting drink! It is the best that exists."

His peculiar type of religious devotion, so acidly criticized, has already been touched on. It is personal and characteristic of the man, mingled inextricably with the cause he has at heart, the welfare of France, and by no means a standard for the devout. The enormous sums he spends on votive gifts to the great shrines of France (12,335 livres in the year 1482, near his death) are in the nature of an investment, a bargain with Providence; and when one has followed Dr. Johnson's precept and endeavored to clear the mind of cant it does not seem that such an attitude towards the Court of Heaven is much more than a severely practical and literal development of the duty of prayer—carried out, it is true, in its crudest and least commendable form. On the other hand, to represent him as merely keeping a material profit-and-loss account with Heaven is absurd, for his religious faith was sincere, deep-rooted, and constant, and his deathbed enviable.

Are any necessary traits wanting to complete the portrait? Louis is cultivated, speaking his own language like a gentleman, speaking good Italian, and remembering some of his Latin. His admiration for Italy is as fervent as that of a cultivated Englishman of the Elizabethan period, and Francesco Sforza, Duke of Milan, is his lifelong hero: Louis' keen, clear intelligence salutes the steel-cold intelligences across the Alps and acknowledges them his masters in policy. To enjoy crossing swords in subtlety with an envoy of Sforza Louis will keep his horse, saddled ready for the hunt, pawing the ground for two hours at the door; yet his standard diplomacy, for all its secretive and tortuous aspects, is not a slavish imitation of the Italian, but characteristic. His skill is in bargaining, in the judicious use of money, in the employment of a thousand espionages and threads of intrigue whereby the movements of the adversary can be judged; and if he makes a mistake he can generally recover himself, by hard work or good fortune. In this manner he avoids needless bloodshed, and for this alone his country owes him a sufficient debt.

"Melodramatic history," says M. Jacques Bainville, "is stirred to pity over the fate of Balue, Saint-Pol, and Nemours. . . . It does not take into account the thousands of humble human lives that Louis XI spared and protected in giving France order and frontiers."

A few brief strokes from the pens of Olivier de la Marche and Bishop Thomas Basin, the one a Burgundian, the other personally hostile, may finish the sketch. These two find Louis a man of cold, calculating brain, suspicious, secret, crafty, revolving his policy a long time ahead, apt nevertheless to impulsive action, brusque, reckless sometimes, prone to dismiss his moſt valuable men suddenly; a contradictory character, now miserly, now lavish. It is necessary to discount this criticism to a reasonable extent by the fact that neither of these writers could have any insight into moſt of Louis' motives; and it is clear that behind their bitter criticism there peeps inevitably unwilling admiration for a maſter-mind. One might not love Louis—few of his contemporaries did, leaſt of all the mass of his subjects, who left the weight of his government; but he received from moſt of those who came in contact with him the respect due to his force and intelligence.

So much for the man who has juſt ascended the French throne. It is more difficult to summarize his work as briefly.

§ 3

Through the close-knit fabric of this reign, with its vaſt crossing and recrossing of fine and baffling filaments, run two ſtrong threads which (first breathing an invocation and prayer to Clio) we may diſtinguish and disentangle and follow to the end, thereby perceiving two moſt vital achievements of Louis XI: the one, the manner in which he secured internal peace by defeating the Great Vassals, *la haute Féodalité;* the other, his dealing with the ancient external enemy, the English.

Four diſtinct tidal waves of rebellion from the feudal nobility rise against Louis, and he survives them all triumphantly. The first is the League of Public Weal in 1464-5; the second a coalition of Charles the Rash of Burgundy and François II, Duke of Burgundy, assisted from outside by Edward IV of England, in 1468; the third a fresh attempt by Burgundy, assisted by Edward IV and Jean II, King of Aragon, in 1472; and the fourth Burgundy's final attempt, which begins in 1475 and ends in disaster before the walls of Nancy.

The first and greatest wave, the rising of the Great Vassals *en masse,* might well have swept Louis away at the very beginning of his task. It is the intention of this brief study to concentrate strictly on the struggle between Louis and the Vassals and his final emerging in victory; therefore the briefest attention only may be spared for the enormous (and naturally unpopular to a degree) administrative and organizing work of the first four years of the reign, which was one of the primary causes of this revolt. A bald recital of the initial work done by Louis at this time would fill pages. During these four years he is traveling perpetually from one end of his dominions to the other, granting concessions, repressing abuses, granting fairs, encouraging commerce, establishing municipalities, removing obstacles to trade, establishing local parliaments, issuing charters, confirming old privileges of towns and corporations and religious houses and universities and granting new, exacting (or remitting) taxes, creating everywhere a strong foundation for prosperity; a dynamo of energy, restless, redoubtable. Nothing is too small for his attention, nothing too great, whether it is the establishment of the great Silk Fairs of Lyons, which will defeat the monopoly of Geneva, or the removal of dissatisfaction among the tailors of Bordeaux, whether it is the abrogation and subsequent restoration of the Pragmatic Sanction or the reëstablishing of the dissolved Order of Cluny. North and south, east and west rides the insignificant figure in the drab riding-habit, or rough pilgrim's dress, peering everywhere, inquiring, judging, acting. Louis' economic policy alone is masterly. He sees everything. The towns are given stability of government, a carefully-selected mayor and corporation; and at the same time opportunity is afforded them to become not only self-supporting but wealthy, by means of open fairs and assured revenues. On valuable ports like La Rochelle, trading with Flanders and Holland and the Hanse towns of Germany, Louis showers privileges. Such a town as Bayonne, ruined by the wars and by plague, he will exempt from every kind of tax and set on its feet again by establishing two open fairs. All this unremitting spadework the jealousy and ambition of the feudal lords will shortly attempt to bring to nothing; but during these years, while Louis has seemed preoccupied by domestic affairs, he has taken one precaution, among others, which the course of events will soon prove providential: he has in 1463 made a treaty of friendship and alliance with Francesco Sforza, Duke of Milan, his lifelong hero, who has the strongest army in Italy. This treaty will last Sforza's lifetime.

It is appropriate that a commercial transaction should open the fight with the Vassals: the purchase by Louis XI from the House of Burgundy of the towns of the Somme—Amiens, St. Quentin, Abbeville, Ponthieu, Montreuil, and others—which in Burgundian hands are a perpetual menace to Paris. For this purchase there is required 400,000 crowns, for which sums these towns passed into Burgundy's hands by the reconciliation Treaty of Arras in 1435. Philip the Good of Burgundy, that high gentleman, is by this time fallen into his dotage, an old fool playing with women and hoarding gold, and Louis accordingly makes his plans. A temporary truce is patched up with the English, who have been hovering; the reluctant Parisians, on whom a heavy tax is laid in September, 1462, murmur bitterly, and pay; half the money is found from the Treasury, the rest raised from Paris and elsewhere, and Louis gets his towns—the first-fruits of that recovery of French land, *la terre,* which is his passion. On June 9, 1464, he makes his triumphal entry into Amiens, as exultant as a peasant who has brought off a sharp stroke of business at market. "Don't you think," he says to the Milanese Ambassador, "that this one town of Amiens is by itself worth more than the 400,000 crowns I have paid to the Duke of Burgundy?" And having addressed to the smarting Parisians an appeal to their patriotism he travels into his newly acquired towns of Picardy, granting and confirming municipal privileges, establishing fairs, attending minutely to his business as before.

Meanwhile the clouds are gathering. Charolais, son of Philip the Good of Burgundy, soon to be Duke Charles the Rash, is furious at the sale of the Picard towns, despite the pension of 36,000 crowns and the Lieutenancy of Normandy granted him by Louis. He is allied by treaty to François II, Duke of Brittany, who has commercial bonds with the English and who has already challenged Louis XI's right to demand temporal homage from a Breton bishop. The pretensions of François, indeed, are almost as spectacular as Burgundy's own. He uses a crown on his arms and his own seal, grants charters "by the grace of God," receives private bulls from the Holy See, refuses liege-homage to the French Crown. In December, 1464, the trouble is so far grown to a head that François II on the one side is summoning the States of Brittany, Louis, on the other, the States of Tours; to which assembly the King convokes the princes of France, that he may gauge their attitude in the matter. The princes, headed by René, King of Anjou and Sicily, are the Dukes of Orleans, Bourbon, Berry, Angoulême, and four more, all of whom decide to stand by the Crown; and after receiving Louis' thanks they separate, at his request, to remonstrate individually with the Duke of Brittany.

The cynical repetitions of history! A very few years ago it was Louis who, at the head of the league of rebel nobles called the *Praguerie,* was ready to march against the Crown. Now it is Louis' brother, the eighteen-year-old Charles of France, *le petit seigneur,* heir to the throne, who (the news arrives) has gone into Brittany and is backed by a coalition of nobles of which Burgundy, Brittany, Lorraine and Bourbon are the chief: five hundred princes and gentlemen in all, wearing a badge of red silk thread and calling themselves the League of the Public Weal, whose professed object is to "reform" the administration of the French Crown. And Louis, whose meditations may be imagined, sardonically sums up the position: "If we had consented to increase their pensions and to permit them to trample on their own vassals as in the past, they would never have thought of the Public Weal." Relatively he could contemplate the situation with calmness, since he had behind him, thanks to the father he had tried to depose, an excellent disciplined standing army. "The King," said Charles the Rash bitterly, now or later, "is always ready." Louis' position nevertheless is none too comfortable. Only one of the great vassals, it soon appears, actually takes arms for him: Gaston, Comte de Foix, who is able to handle the Midi and relieve Louis of apprehension concerning the south. Two lesser nobles are also with the King, the Counts of Eu and Vendôme; but their assistance is valueless. René of Sicily, Anjou, and Provence keeps out of the business. His son, Charles du Maine, and the Comte de Nevers profess friendship for the King, but act otherwise behind his back. The odds against Louis are therefore heavy. And now, learning that the rebels have proclaimed his brother Regent of France, Louis takes action; his loyal towns are warned; the rebels are offered clemency if they submit; Louis announces his strong desire not to shed blood if possible, and appeals to his towns not to take part in a seditious war which can benefit nobody but the English, the ancient enemy. But the clash is not to be avoided; the League, with Charolais in command of some ten thousand men, begins the march on Paris. At St. Denis they were to have been reinforced by other princes; but these are not at the rendezvous.

Louis meanwhile has proclaimed the ban and arrière-ban and marched with his artillery into the Bourbonnais; he has not much immediate fear of losing Paris, with its 30,000 citizens and its own artillery. Paris is to all intents and purposes safe for the King under the command of Charles de Melun and Jehan Balue, Bishop of Evreux; which prelate, indeed, takes his responsibility seriously enough to review eight thousand Parisian troops on the Plaine St. Antoine. But the age of fighting churchmen, Archbishop Turpin at Roncesvalles, Bishop Odo of Bayeux at Hastings, the Bishop of Senlis at Bouvines, is passed, and Balue's military parade only raises a snigger among the professional soldiers. "Sir," says the rough Chabannes, Comte de Dammartin, to Louis XI on hearing of it, "since your Majesty allows Monseigneur Balue to review the troops of Paris, permit me to go to Evreux and consecrate a few priests." And Louis laughs heartily.

In the Bourbonnais Louis takes several towns and strong points and is stimulated—first-fruits of the treaty with Sforza—by the arrival in Dauphiny of an Italian force, of whom Louis will gratefully say, on the day of Francesco Sforza's death, that they saved him the Crown. But without waiting for these reinforcements he marches straight for Paris, where nothing save a few skirmishes has yet taken place; and on July 16, 1465, his advance-guard under Pierre de Brézé arrives at Montlhéry.

(“Imagine,” observes M. Bainville parenthetically, “the weak ſtate of a government whose fate was to be decided at a couple of leagues’ distance from its capital!”)

The battle of Montlhéry is a confused and disorderly business fought in blazing heat, amid the blinding duſt of trampled cornfields: a business of which the charmingly ironic account may be found in the pages of Commynes, who was present on the Burgundian side. Charolais, having thrown his cavalry upon the royal advance-guard so rapidly that Louis’ archers cannot discharge their arrows and are broken, orders the charge on up the hill where the King is with his artillery, whose fire has hardly scathed the enemy, since the pieces are placed too high. At this moment Louis shows that furious fighting courage of his which chimes so oddly with the reſt of his character. He dashes down the hill, and at the cry “The King is taken” lifts his visor and rallies his men three times, shouting, “See, my children, I’m not taken!” adding: “Fall on them again, have no fear; if there were no more than six of us to fight these Burgundians we should win!” And he and his men fall on the enemy so decisively that they fly in all directions in a huddle. Charolais, nevertheless, remaining with his artillery, believes the day has been won with the breaking of Louis’ front line; he therefore spurs on to the Orleans road to cut off the fugitives’ retreat, becomes involved in duſt and confusion, and is wounded by a halberd-thruſt; there is something comic in the bustle of his fury. Evening comes. Charolais sleeps on a truss of ſtraw in a tent on the field of battle, and at dawn learns that the French have withdrawn from their position and that the King has taken the Corbeil road; and at the news he swells up with pride and vainglory. The day of Montlhéry may be said to have begun his downfall; from this day he eſteems himself an Alexander, a god of war, with the world at his feet.

"Monseigneur de Charolais," observes Commynes, whom it is a perpetual pleasure to quote, "remained on the field, very joyous, judging the glory to be his; which since cost him dear, for after this he took counsel of no man but himself. Before this day he was very little inclined to war, and cared little for anything pertaining to it, but after this he changed his mind, and continued so until his death." The engagement of Montlhéry is actually nobody's battle, and therefore both sides claim it. Louis XI, who holds the more trumps, since he is unbeaten and still holds Paris, draws up a communiqué to the people of Lyons which is worthy of ranking with some of the best romantic efforts of either side in the late European War (1914-18). He then pushes on to Paris, where he punishes one or two traitors and hastily takes off some of the heavy taxes which are making the Parisians rebellious. Charolais follows, taking up his position beneath the walls. The Parisians look glumly down at the Burgundians and their trampled fields; the King meanwhile has left hurriedly for Normandy to scrape up more troops and more money, and in his absence Charolais and the rebel nobles open pourparlers for the handing over of the capital. . . . But very rapidly Louis is back again with 12,000 men and a commissariat, and hostilities are renewed. There is an oddly modern flavor in the dispositions of this second engagement; Louis' troops, for example, dig a deep trench between Charenton and Conflans, and the royal artillery, well under cover there, makes a "demonstration" for three or four days across the river, one or two balls going through the room where Charolais and his staff are at dinner—for it seems that then such proximity of the staff to the line was possible. There are bombardments and alarms; then the rebels begin seeking a parley again, and envoys pass from camp to camp. Finally Louis himself crosses the river and enters the Burgundian camp, smiling and courteous. Charolais ("I know," says Louis to him as they meet, "that you are a gentleman, and of the House of France") is stubborn in his demands: he will have his towns of the Somme back, with the Duchy of Normandy for the *petit seigneur,* Charles, Louis' brother; the King in return, very graciously, makes his own modest offer—the Constableship of France for the Comte de Saint-Pol; and they separate. Basin, Bishop of Lisieux, explains in his History exactly why the leaders of the League insist so doggedly on Charles of France's being given Normandy. It is because Normandy adjoins Brittany on the one side and Burgundian territory—with an insignificant interval—on the other; so that Charles, Burgundy, and Brittany together will hold all the coast from Flanders to Poitou, besides being easily able to obtain assistance from England and defy the King. The ensuing negotiations, taken up at Conflans, are obscure and insincere, and cautious, and their ultimate result surprising; for Louis suddenly gives way to everything. Charolais gets back his Somme towns, the valuable towns for which the King only recently paid 400,000 gold crowns; Charles of France gets his Duchy of Normandy in exchange for his appanage of Berry, Saint-Pol gets his Constableship: all three on condition of taking the oath of allegiance to the Crown. One would say that Louis had been heavily defeated all along the line; but this is rank injustice to his capabilities. He has been compelled to relinquish a great deal, but he has preserved Paris and saved the Crown, which is the vital thing, and the coalition will now dissolve and give him breathing-space to strengthen his position. Before long he will turn the position to his advantage. If anyone is to be fooled in this business it is our dear brother of Burgundy.

The ink of the treaties at Conflans and St. Maur by which the King and the League came to terms is hardly dry before

Louis is meditating the recovery of Normandy, that rich province. It would take many closely-written pages to unravel the multiple intrigues immediately following the break-up of the League: the plainest fact emerging is that Louis immediately summons the States-General to declare that the cession of Normandy, made under pressure, is illegal and therefore null and void. The charge may be brought against him that he signed the treaty of Conflans in a tight corner without any intention of keeping it; it is this charge which a minute analysis of the history of the next few weeks could mitigate, if not rebut entirely. One must recall chiefly, for the fiftieth time, that Louis is working against strong and unscrupulous enemies.

He does not trust his little brother Charles, who is a personage to keep both eyes on: for with Charles Duke of Normandy one may look for trouble not only from his friends Burgundy and Brittany but from the English, who after four centuries of intimate contact can scarcely believe that Normandy is not theirs by right. The sum for the purchase of Normandy which Louis is revolving in his mind is 500,000 crowns, and he will give his brother another province in exchange. And then, swiftly, he sees his chance, a passing disagreement between Charles and Brittany. Before anyone can turn, Louis' troops are holding four Norman towns, and Bourbon, now assisting him, is at Evreux. Charles, his brother, not deceived by Louis' pretext of help, flies into Brittany before he can be taken by Louis' men, and soon afterwards Louis makes his entry into Rouen, graciously pardoning all those rebels who come to him. He declares that his sole desire is for peace: peace and unchallenged authority. . . . Away in the Low Countries his agents are stirring up the citizens of Liége, a perpetual thorn (like Ghent and Malines and other stubborn Flemish towns) in the side of Burgundy; for while Louis' desire is for peace he is carefully preparing for the next storm, which is already gathering. Orders go out to the towns of Senlis and Amboise to look to their defenses. Under the surface there is brisk activity. Philip the Good has just died, and Charolais, now Charles, surnamed the Rash, Duke of Burgundy, is allied with Brittany and Edward IV and making plans for large trouble; and before very long Louis, the calculating, the shrewd, will make one of the two great blunders of his career and will place himself directly in his enemy's hands, barely escaping with his life.

Commynes, an eyewitness, has left an account of this escapade at once simple and vivid. Louis brings trouble summarily to a head by entering Brittany and taking two towns there, immediately after Charles of Burgundy has cruelly punished Liége for its resistance. Charles calls on the King to desist from attacking his allies Brittany and Normandy, signatories to the late treaty. He gets no satisfactory reply, and at once moves with his troops to the strong town of Péronne on the Somme. Louis, whose object is to drive a wedge between the dukes of Brittany and Burgundy, parleys with Brittany and Normandy, and a treaty of peace is concluded with them both at Noyon in September 1468. (One of Louis' ambassadors is Jehan Balue, now Cardinal, his protégé, a pushing politician who will eventually reap his just reward.) The feelings of Charles the Rash on learning of this treaty made behind his back may be imagined. Louis' trick has been skillfully played. Charles of France, Duke of Normandy, is to hand over Normandy in exchange for some other province to be decided and a pension of 60,000 livres; both he and Brittany renounce all alliances and declare their allegiance to the Crown.

Here it is that Louis, the fox, overreaches himself, and, having brought off one successful financial *coup,* proceeds to attempt another with Burgundy.

His first move is to send 60,000 crowns to Burgundy to compensate him for his expense in war preparations and to mollify his raging at the Norman-Breton truce. Louis then sends his plenipotentiaries to Ham to discuss peace: they are the Comte de St. Pol, Pierre Doriole, Louis' chancellor, and Cardinal Balue the astute. After nine days the negotiations break down, and Louis, in a fit of that impatience which consorts so often and so curiously with his habitual cool deliberation, determines on a personal interview with Burgundy at Péronne, although Balue tries hard to dissuade him, partly from policy, partly, no doubt, from affection. Balue wishes to handle this matter himself. Louis is determined to do the same; therefore Louis wins. On October 9, 1468, the King, for whom Balue has procured a safe-conduct, leaves Ham with a small bodyguard and rides to Péronne, where Burgundy is, taking with him Balue, the Duke of Bourbon, the Archbishop of Lyons, and one or two others; and next day negotiations open once more between Balue, acting for Louis, and Guillaume Biche, representing Burgundy. There is every chance of these conversations resulting in a settlement, since the only point at issue is the question of Burgundy's alliances and their renunciation. Then, suddenly, a bombshell is dropped. A courier arrives in Péronne with awkward—and exaggerated—news from the direction of Liége, where Louis' agents, steadily at work, have instigated a fresh rising against Burgundy. Has Louis forgotten this? The fury of Charles the Rash flares up, and on a pretext (the loss of a box of jewels) he closes the gates of Péronne and the gates of the Château, where Louis is lodged. From his windows Louis can see the Burgundian archers keeping the doors. He is now with a vengeance in the lion's den.

Charles is beside himself with rage at the King's duplicity, and capable of anything; his menaces come to the ears of Louis, who, courageous as he is in the field, is thoroughly frightened. Instinctively he has recourse to his favorite method of cash payments. Hurriedly he hands Balue some 15,000 crowns, to be distributed among those of Burgundy's household most likely to be of use in this desperate crisis. Balue, whose strong political ambition is balanced by avarice almost as strong, keeps back some seven or eight thousand crowns for himself and uses the remainder as he is ordered: among the beneficiaries is Antony, Bastard of Burgundy, brother of Charles the Rash, who a few hours later will repay Louis for a *douceur* of 1000 crowns by dissuading the raging Charles from murdering the King.

Meanwhile Charles is deliberating, taking counsel—as far as such a man ever took counsel—concerning what he shall do with his prisoner, and for two days and nights cannot make up his mind, although Louis makes offers of peace and reparation. On the third night, says Commynes, "the said Duke did not once take off his clothes, and only lay on his bed twice or thrice, and then paced to and fro, for such was his habit when he was agitated. I lay that night in his room, and many times paced to and fro with him. Towards the morning he was in a greater fury than ever, full of menaces, and ready to do something portentous . . . and suddenly he left the room to go into the King's room and speak with him. The King had some friend or other who had warned him, assuring him that he would come to no harm if he agreed on these two points (i.e. the punishment of the Liégois, and a peace treaty), but that if he did the contrary he would place himself in such peril that nothing worse could happen to him."

"Some friend or other" is Commynes himself, whose admiration for the King has been growing ever since Montlhéry; and we see Burgundy brusquely entering Louis' room, his voice (says Commynes) trembling with fury. But Louis bows to the storm and agrees to everything, takes an oath on a cross formerly belonging to Charlemagne, swallows his humiliation, signs away a dozen things prejudicial to himself; acknowledging, for example, the jurisdiction of Burgundy and of his council and the right of exemption of Burgundy's subjects from personal service in defense of the Crown, confirming the return of the Somme towns, giving Champagne to his brother Charles. One may imagine Louis' expression as he signs and signs and chews his rage. Next day he rides with his dear brother of Burgundy, as the contract requires, to punish the Liégois, his allies, whom his agents have been stirring up. He has tried several times to dissuade Charles from this, but in vain. He is now pliant, courteous, even flattering to our dear brother. And the town is given over to sack and the flames, while the valiant inhabitants fly for safety to the Ardennes. These few days are the bitterest in Louis' life, and when the last humiliation is over and he can return to France to ratify the treaty with Burgundy one would like to read his inmost thoughts as he halts at Senlis to say his prayers at Our Lady of Victory.

Revenge is not long in coming. Louis checkmates Burgundy's attempt at a second league by making sure of his brother Charles, forcing Charles to accept Guyenne instead of Champagne[4] and to take an oath on the True Cross of St. Laud of Angers that he will never seek to harm the King. Those who swear on this relic and commit perjury die within the year. Louis also has the treaty of Péronne annulled by the

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[4] Champagne bordered Burgundian territory. Guyenne, more distant, was removed from intrigue.

States-General of Tours on the not unreasonable grounds that he was caught in a trap by Burgundy and made to sign under duress and in bodily peril. In May, 1472, Providence assists him by removing his dangerous brother Charles, who dies at Bordeaux; on the news of which death Burgundy violently accuses Louis of having had his brother poisoned. The accusation is repeated with pleasure by Thomas Basin and by Olivier de la Marche. There is no truth in it.

The death of Charles of France has filled Burgundy with ungovernable fury. It has upset his plans for a third rising against Louis XI, in which he was to be assisted by Edward IV of England and by Jean II of Aragon, who in 1462 pawned the provinces of the Roussillon and the Cerdagne to Louis for 300,000 crowns, and now wants them back. Charles of France, who was concerned in the business, having thus inconveniently died, Burgundy rushes into preparations for war, this time (says Commynes) foul and ugly war, *guerre ort et mauvais,* such as he has never waged before: which includes the routine use of fire everywhere he sends his troops. It is time for Louis to deal with him, for his hatred, arrogance, and ambition are becoming intolerable. Burgundy is hand in glove with the English, has married an English wife, Margaret of York, flaunts the Order of the Garter, menaces the King's work everywhere. But Louis is ready for the fight again; his troops occupy St. Quentin, Roye, and Montdidier on the Somme. Amiens declares for the King, having duly considered the promised alternative of destruction, and after some minor engagements and a brief truce Burgundy arrives before Arras, and then before Beauvais. His fury at the defection of Amiens has been a little assuaged by the taking of Nesles with extreme cruelty, hanging the garrison or cutting off their hands; for Burgundy is vindictive now as well as enraged. Beauvais holds out under three weeks of fierce Burgundian bombardments and hot assaults, and although Charles succeeds in carrying the suburbs the desperate courage of the citizens beats him. The joy of Louis is inexpressible: he showers privileges on his good town of Beauvais—a municipal charter, exemption from all taxation, exemption from ban and arrière-ban, liberty to acquire fiefs reserved hitherto to the nobility. And here one may pause with relief from the arid business of marching and countermarching to dwell a moment on the behavior of the women of Beauvais and their reward; for they have fought on the walls side by side with the men, hewing and thrusting and hurling, *"en très grant audace, constance, et vertu de force, largement, oultre extimation du sexe feminin."* [5]

The happiness of Louis descends in showers of congratulation and privilege on the women of Beauvais. On the 17th of June every year, the anniversary of the hottest Burgundian attack, he orders a procession in honor of Our Lord and Madame St. Agadesme; in which procession the gallant women of Beauvais shall walk immediately after the clergy, taking precedence of the men. For these heroines, also, there shall be no sumptuary laws; they shall enjoy the extraordinary privilege of wearing, whatever their degree, whatever clothing and adornments they please—*"tels vestemens, atours, joyaulx, et ornemens que bon leur semblera"*—whenever they please. The extent of this favor may be gauged by a glance at the laws regulating women's dress in France which existed until the eighteenth century. There is an edict of Louis XIV ordering women of the bourgeoisie to remove gold lace from their gowns: it would be interesting to discover whether this was applied in its rigor to the ladies of Beauvais.

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[5] The existence of Jehanne Hatchette, the traditional heroine of the siege of Beauvais, who performed such deeds with her whirling ax, is questioned by some judicious historians, who consider her an eighteenth-century embroidery. The story of Jehanne Hachette seems to have grown up around the fame of a girl of Beauvais named Jehanne Laisne, who was singled out for mention in despatches after the siege for bravery in capturing a Burgundian standard single-handed.

Charles the Rash retires from Beauvais to Rouen, destroying the countryside. He now wishes to make peace with the Duke of Brittany, but Louis XI has already bought the Duke of Brittany, who will make no further alliance with Burgundy or the English. And Charles, baffled here, turns his eyes elsewhere, filled with orgulous dreams. His imagination and his early successes have turned his head. His state of mind is Picrocholian, though he brooks no counsel from any Duke of Smalltrash, Earl Swashbuckle, or Captain Durtaille. For a beginning, he has intentions of joining his lands of Flanders and Artois by taking Alsace and Lorraine. "He had in hand," says Oliver de la Marche, "more enterprises than thirty men's lives could have compassed." He further has intentions of making himself the most powerful prince in Europe by absorbing the Rhine countries, Savoy—"of which," says Commynes, "he disposed as if it were his own"—Provence, Dauphiny, making one vast solid duchy extending from the Mediterranean to the North Sea. All these schemes have been actively begun, for though the Swiss and the Rhenish provinces steadily resist his plans in their behalf he has bought Upper Alsace from the Archduke of Austria, has acquired the province of Guelders from its duke, and is in negotiation for Provence with King René. Nor do Burgundy's dreams stop here. He has deposed in the presence of a notary in 1471 that his mother, Isabella of Portugal, had declared herself the sole heiress of Henry VI of England, and that she had transmitted her right to the English Crown to him, Burgundy.[6] Yet further, he has his eyes fixed on the Empire. In the meantime he establishes parliaments at Beaune and Dôle and a Court of Appeals at Malines, and forbids Burgundian subjects to appeal thence to the King's Courts in Paris.

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[6] Philippa, sister of Henry IV of England, grandfather of Henry VI, married John I, King of Portugal.

In the estimation of Commynes he is a fool and a stubborn fool, whose understanding God has permitted to become disordered; a judgment which appears just when his next action is considered; for, favored by a truce with Louis XI, who is quite willing to give him any length of rope to hang himself, he blunders into a quarrel between the Archbishop of Cologne and his chapter, and proceeds forthwith to sit down with his army in front of the strong fortified town of Neuss in what is now Rhenish Prussia. . . . In the taverns of Paris they are singing a song which accurately sums up the position:

Berry est mort,
Bretaigne dort,
Bourgongne hongne,
Le Roy besogne.

> [Berry (i.e. Charles of France, formerly Duke of Berry) is dead; Brittany is asleep; Burgundy is on the rampage . . . and the King is at work!]

The siege of Neuss by Charles of Burgundy as recounted by the Burgundian Molinet is something so fantastic that it might have been conceived by a satirist. Burgundy takes the field with all his household and the splendor of the Golden Fleece; his camp is a little town of trenches, with a market in which all sorts of merchandise from Flanders is sold; there is a court of justice; there are baths, and taverns, and flour-mills, and a gallows, and marriages and funerals take place, to the accompaniment of the Duke's minstrelsy. The Duke has nine hundred splendid tents and pavilions; in his own great pavilion he receives the Kings of Norway and Denmark. Meanwhile his troops attack the walls of Neuss at intervals with huge machines copied from the Romans, including a tall tower on wheels, which sticks in the mud, to the vast amusement of the besieged. There are constant bombardments by the Duke's artillery. Contemplating such a scene of burlesque, one remembers suddenly that Charles the Rash was practically a water-drinker.

The month of January, 1475, brings with it something of a shock for Louis XI, accustomed as he is to a cynical appraisal of men and their actions; for Galeas Sforza, Duke of Milan, son of Louis' hero and friend Francesco, suddenly proclaims an alliance with Burgundy, whose foolish siege of Neuss has been brought at last to a conclusion by the intervention of the Papal Legate. Louis parries this severe blow by immediately allying himself with Ferdinand of Spain by a promise of marriage between his son, the Dauphin Charles, and the Infanta. But it is a bad year for Louis, for on the heels of the Italian's defection comes a descent of the English with a strong army; and the seven-years' truce of the Treaty of Picquigny, whose peculiar and (in one instance) jolly aspects will be dealt with in another place, costs the French King 75,000 crowns down and a pension of 50,000. On the other hand, he confirms the peace treaty with the Duke of Brittany and makes him Lieutenant-General of France. Peace! He wants it sincerely, in order that he may get on with his work for France. It is in this year that he establishes, all over France, the daily prayer and ringing of the Angelus "for the gift of peace and union in our kingdom"; to which an indulgence of 300 days is attached. But peace is not yet, though Louis will before long be delivered from his worst enemy.

Since this is Burgundy's final move, it may be as well to glance at the disposition of the chessboard and the relative strength of the two antagonists before proceeding.

Burgundy has on his side against Louis, until the moment of the Treaty of Picquigny (which means little in his life), the English, the Duke of Brittany, the King of Aragon, and that remainder of the available feudal nobles who are once more ready, if there seems a chance of success, to rise again and overwhelm their master and tyrant. Louis' brilliant bargain with the English for cash down suddenly deprives Burgundy of his chief ally: Louis has also included Burgundy himself for the moment in a precarious truce. On Louis' side there are the Swiss, whom he has swung to his side by a treaty at Berne (and the honest Swiss make Louis pay as thoroughly through the nose for their friendship as if he were an hotel guest in the season), the Emperor and the German princes, with whom Louis signs a treaty at Andernach on the Rhine, and Duke Sigismund of Austria, whom Louis has persuaded into uniting Constance with the Swiss Cantons.

On the other hand, Burgundy is able to harass some of Louis' allies: against the Emperor, for example, he can agitate George Podiebrad, King of Bohemia, Mathias Corvin, King of Hungary, the Archbishop of Cologne, and the Elector Palatine: but these are only minor irritants. And Louis, lying low, watching from a distance, playing his most characteristic spider's game, is content to allow Burgundy to make the first move and embroil himself, meanwhile secretly encouraging his (Louis') allies against him, spinning his web in silence. He is well aware that his truce with Burgundy will not last very long; meanwhile he has sucked a reasonable advantage from it by having the traitor Saint-Pol handed over to him by Charles the Rash for execution.

The maneuvering for position (if it can so be called when only one opponent is in the open) is soon over. Burgundy makes the expected first move by marching into Lorraine and taking it from the young Duke René II. Thence he goes on, flushed with triumph, to attack the Swiss at Granson, exercising cruel vengeance on the defenders when the garrison falls. But this time he has stirred up the wasps: the Swiss pour down from their mountains shouting for revenge and sweep the Burgundians out of their encampment, looting it thoroughly. The plunder is immense: costly tapestries, commissariat, arms, treasure of every kind, including Charles' noble hat, adorned with a blaze of jewels. The unexpected shock of Granson, says Commynes, affects Charles so bitterly that he falls seriously ill; and meanwhile the aged René of Anjou, from whom he has been expecting the transfer of Provence, wisely changes his mind and returns to the alliance of Louis XI and a pension of 60,000 crowns. Another heavy defeat by the Swiss awaits Charles immediately at Morat, and once again he is compelled to fly to save his life, leaving his camp to be thoroughly pillaged (it is actually the Winter Sports Season). From Morat he turns once more into Lorraine, furious, melancholy, half mad as the *pauvre cholérique* Picrochole in *Pantagruel*. Now René II of Lorraine, having recovered, is firmly opposing him at Louis' instigation, and Charles pitches camp before Nancy just before Christmas: a terrible freezing Christmas which grievously afflicts his diminished troops.

. . . All this time Louis has been following Burgundy's progress with increasing joy, metaphorically hugging himself, holding back from the bank for fear of frightening the fish, silently egging on the opposition. Now, at the good news from Switzerland, one can almost see him dancing. He pours out grateful thanks to Our Lady at Lyons; he almost hysterically congratulates the Swiss of the Berne country. Then at last, on a bitter January day of the new year 1477, comes the news of the death of the Rash and the finding of his body, naked, terribly wounded, half devoured by wolves, on a frozen pond outside the walls of Nancy. If only all the enemies of France would dispose of themselves so economically!

It is the end of the House of Burgundy, that great house. Only the arts it so royally protected survive its fall.

It is after the fall of Burgundy that Louis XI makes a mistake: the great mistake of his career, though he could not possibly foresee its consequences. Nor could any other mortal man.

Charles the Rash left an heiress, Marie of Burgundy, a girl of twenty. Since he left no male heir the province of Burgundy fell in automatically to the Crown, of which he was still technically a vassal. Moreover, Louis XI, all his peasant's joy at acquiring land consuming him, immediately laid hands on Burgundy's other French territory—Artois, the Franche-Comté, Picardy, and the district of Boulogne, although Marie of Burgundy had attempted to forestall him with a manifesto declaring that Burgundy had never been part of the Crown's dominions. Marie's next move, in the face of the inevitable, was to send a deputation to Louis at Péronne (what vengeance for his humiliations at the hands of Burgundy in 1468!) to negotiate. Louis' intention, laid before the delegates, was clear: he wished to bring the rich Burgundian lands of Flanders, Brabant and Hainault into the possession of France by marrying his eight-year-old son to Marie; and in the meantime he prevailed upon Marie's delegates to give him back the city of Arras.

The States-General of Flanders and Brabant, swallowing their irritation at the loss of Arras for the sake of peace, informed Louis that the Duchess Marie was prepared to agree to what they might decide; but Louis making a familiar move, skillfully drove a wedge between Marie and the States-General by producing a confidential letter of hers in which it was written that under the appearance of accepting the States' decision she would follow her own counselors' advice. The result was the trouble which Louis had intended. The Ghent mob rose and put Marie's two principal delegates to death.

Louis' next move was to send Olivier le Daim as ambassador to Marie to discuss the Franco-Burgundian marriage. As will appear in a later page, the barber-surgeon-diplomat's mission was an instant and grotesque failure, and he narrowly escaped being thrown into the river. And now Louis began to have his own doubts of the wisdom of this marriage, remembering (it is obvious) his own unhappy childhood-marriage of policy, and possibly fearing also that as he had turned against his father, so his young son, wielding such power, might equally one day turn against the Crown. He revolved the matter carefully. Another solution occurred to him as being sounder—the splitting up of the Flemish possessions of Burgundy into small parcels among such allies and friends as the Counts of Hainault and Namur and some of the German princelings, none of whom could do France any harm. He debated the matter earnestly with his friend Commynes. "It was his good pleasure," says Commynes, "to tell me all these things, because I had formerly advised him to take the other road [Commynes had suggested that Marie should be married to a French prince], and he wished me to know his reasons for disagreeing with me; for he believed this other plan to be more beneficial to his kingdom, which had suffered so much from the vastness of the House of Burgundy and the great seigneuries it possessed."

Commynes was right, Louis was wrong. After Marie of Burgundy's haughty refusal to listen to his ambassador Louis began a campaign of severe intimidation against the Flemings, spreading devastation and fire. Marie, abandoned, having nowhere else to turn,[7] accepted the hand of the son of the Emperor of Germany, Maximilian of Austria, a poor but ambitious young man. In August, 1477, she married this prince, taking with her into the House of Austria, as her dowry, the territories of Flanders, Brabant, and Hainault.

Three hundred years later Louis XV will say, standing at Marie's tomb: "Here is the origin of all our wars!" Stripped of its epigrammatic quality, this judgment is in essence true. The bitter rivalry between the Houses of France and Austria which sprang from the marriage of 1477 will end only with the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. More than one modern French historian, indeed, has been tempted to go further and to include among its indirect consequences even the European war of 1914-18. It cost the French a vast amount of trouble, much bloodshed, and the outpouring of millions of money.

The fault was that of Louis XI, but no statesman of his day, or of any day, could have foreseen these consequences. Commynes (who, it must be remembered, is writing after this event) himself defends his master. If the Franco-Burgundian marriage, he says some years after Louis' death, had taken place, the wars which even then had sprung and were springing from the Austro-Burgundian alliance would never have happened. But he adds, judicious as ever: "I do not wish to blame our King (Louis XI) in the least by saying that he failed in this matter, for it happened that others who knew more than I did were then of his opinion." Nevertheless: "It seems to me that Almighty God had clouded the understanding of our King in this one matter; for if, as I have said, he had not deemed his plan too easily capable of a successful conclusion, and if he had slightly tempered his passion and the vengeance he desired to take on this House of Burgundy, without the least doubt he would hold all this seigneury under his rule today." But Commynes is not the man to dismiss a genius for one blunder. "Without any doubt," he repeats, "he was one of the wisest princes, and one of the most subtle, reigning in his age."

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[7] One other suitor was Anthony Woodville, Lord Scales, brother of the Queen of England, an old man. Edward IV foresaw danger to England's commerce with Flanders, and vetoed the match.

When Louis allowed the Low Countries to pass to Austria the German Empire was poor, and incapable of creating trouble. He had considered Commynes' solution—the marriage of Marie of Burgundy to a French prince of the Blood; but this would inevitably have resuscitated the Burgundian menace and restored the *status quo*. This Louis saw clearly. The Teutonic menace of later years he could not have foreseen. He cannot therefore in justice be debited fully with this blunder. On the contrary, the Austrian marriage has hardly taken place before Louis is seized with misgivings. Maximilian, the ambitious, two years after the marriage, already attempts to check Louis' assimilation of Burgundian lands by force, and after the hot indecisive engagement of Guinegate Louis instantly begins repairing his mistake by negotiating marriage between the Dauphin Charles and Maximilian's daughter, Margaret of Austria. In 1482, less than a year before his death, he brings the betrothal to pass. He has brilliantly retrieved his error of judgment, it would appear; and so no doubt it seemed to his contemporaries. What followed in later years was beyond his control.[8]

It has been seen that Louis has a peace treaty with Brittany. The two greatest and most troublesome vassals are thus out of action; and from now on Louis' menaces dissolve one by one like mist in the sun. In 1469 the intriguing of Jehan V, Duke of Armagnac, the violent and incestuous representative of a violent line, a member of the former League of the Public Weal, whose subsequent behavior has given Louis food for thought more than once, is alleged by a spy to be in communication with England and to have acknowledged Edward IV to be his liege-lord. A letter to this effect is actually produced (as M. Champion observes, Louis was probably not the man to complain of the forgery of such a document if it suited his politics) and Louis sends a punitive expedition under Dammartin to seize Armagnac, who flies in time to Spanish territory; on which an action is brought against him before the Court of Parliament at Paris, and he is declared deprived and outlawed for high treason. A year later he returns to French soil, shuts himself up in the strong town of Lectoure, and during negotiations for surrender is killed in a street brawl. Against Armagnac's younger brother and heir, Charles, Louis draws up a long list of grievances the Crown has suffered at the hands of Armagnac: a royal force marches in and takes Charles out of one of his fortresses; he is removed to Paris, tried, and thrust into the Bastille, where he remains for some years. The lands of Armagnac pass into the administration of the Crown, and so ends one more menace.

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[8] Charles VIII in 1491 married Anne of Brittany, who on his death married his cousin Louis XII (1499), securing her rich dowry of Brittany finally to the Crown.

Another great vassal, Louis de Luxembourg, Comte de Saint-Pol, a stubborn ally of Burgundy and the English, has also succumbed. Saint-Pol is fatally devoted to the dangerous game of diplomacy, and both Louis and Burgundy, whom he has betrayed equally while endeavoring to play off one against the other, are interested in his downfall; actually his is a triple treason, for Edward IV of England is also concerned in his game. Burgundy accuses him of being the cause of the loss of Amiens and St. Quentin; Louis XI, who has favored him in the past with such high office as the Lieutenancy of Normandy, holds a letter from Edward IV written by Saint-Pol advising the English King that the French King will not keep his promises and that the English should not leave France; and Louis knows also that Saint-Pol has promised to give up St. Quentin to Burgundy. A punitive force advances to St. Quentin. Saint-Pol flies to Mons and gives himself up to Burgundy, who, since he is sharing a momentary truce with Louis at the time, delivers him up to the King. He is taken to Paris, tried, and executed on the Place de Grève on December 19, 1475.

In the next year another vassal and traitor ends on the scaffold: Jacques de Nemours, another of the League. His case is clear; he has been a perpetual intriguer against the Crown, has been concerned with Saint-Pol in some of his machinations, has favored the English invasions, and has even made a show of resisting the King's officials. Among the papers of Armagnac have been found letters fully implicating Nemours. The King calls on him to give himself up; he does so, and is thrust into the Bastille pending trial. He attempts to escape, and is sold by his warders; Louis is pitiless, and neither the entreaties of Nemours or his wife avail. Nemours is duly executed at the Halles. There is a picturesque story which makes Louis assemble the children of Nemours around the scaffold to be splashed by their father's blood: it is a fable, constantly repeated, sprung from the fertile imagination of Brantôme.

In 1481, finally, Louis crushes a last fluttering attempt of those feudal malcontents still remaining to take advantage of his illness. The head of the affair is the Duke of Brittany, with him René, Comte du Perche, son of Jehan V, Duke of Alençon, the "*bon feu duc d'Alençon*" of Villon's jocular line in the Ballade of Dead Lords (c. 1461), St. Joan's gallant companion, who had been imprisoned for treason by Charles VII and after being pardoned by Louis XI, was again declared a traitor (and a minter of bad money) in 1474. René and his confederates have their eye on the child Dauphin, so closely guarded in Amboise; with Louis near death and this child in their hands they can restore the old conditions. René is arrested by Louis in August, 1481, makes a poor defense, and is imprisoned for some weeks in a cage at Chinon, and then at Vincennes. In March, 1483, he is ordered by the court to ask Louis' pardon and take the oath of obedience. He is the last of the feudal conspirators, and as for Brittany, Louis brings him to heel by keeping a large force on his frontier, ready to deal with him at the first sign of trouble.

Here, so far as the purpose of this chapter is concerned, comes to an end the outline of Louis XI's conquest of the *haute féodalité.* We may survey his concrete gains. He has Normandy, which he seized and occupied after the collapse of his brother's attempt to hold that duchy after the affair of the League. Guyenne and Berry, rich and spacious, fell to him on his brother's death in 1472. The province of Armagnac he "administered" from 1472 after the death of Jehan V and the imprisonment of his heir: it will never be returned. The Roussillon and the Cerdagne, in the Pyrenees, he holds in a usurer's grip against a loan to the King of Aragon. In 1480 old René of Sicily and Anjou dies, bequeathing him Anjou.[9] In the next year René's part heir, Charles du Maine, dies also, leaving Louis Maine and Provence, this last one of the juiciest of plums, since Provence includes Marseilles, that great port, with all its riches, and the Mediterranean trade. In March,

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[9] Perhaps not exactly, René's heir is his grandson. René, Duke of Bar; but Louis forestalls him and installs himself at Angers gently but firmly; his legal titles to the estate are found afterwards.

1482, a fall from a horse in Bruges removes Marie of Burgundy, wife of Maximilian of Austria, and in December of the same year Louis makes the marriage-treaty of Arras between his son, the Dauphin Charles, and Margaret, the child-daughter of Austria, whose dowry will bring in the Burgundian appanages of Artois and the Franche-Comté to the Crown. Thus ends the barren strife with Maximilian over the apportionment of the remainder of the vast lands of Burgundy. Louis now holds all the Burgundian estates in France, though he has let slip (by a fatal error, already demonstrated) the Low Countries. One may nevertheless realize his satisfaction. "The King's joy," observes Commynes, summing up the year 1477, "was exceedingly great at perceiving himself to be master of all those he hated, and his principal enemies." Now, in the year before his death, he is entitled to rub his thin hands and chuckle like a farmer after a providential market day.

Here, then, concludes the outline, the barest outline, ignoring most of the complex tributaries and undercurrents, of Louis' principal domestic achievement in arms. It must be remembered that during all these troubles he has been carrying on his work of ameliorating the state of France without pause, whatever his other commitments, and that his transactions have covered every phase of administration. His municipal organization alone needs half a volume: like his foreign policy, it is inextricably bound up with every other aspect of his work. One single year of his reign, the year 1471, which other historians have passed over as a year in which nothing particular happened in France, has provided a living authority on Louis XI, M. Champion, with material for a book the size of a small novel. From this may be estimated the amount of detail which could find no place in this flying impression.

§ 4

In the year of Louis' XI's birth the English, as has been seen, held Paris, the Ile-de-France, Normandy, Guyenne, and a great part of Picardy and Champagne. In 1461, when he ascended the throne, the English had been expelled from all the soil of France except Calais. This was the real result of the Hundred Years' War; a hundred years of fighting, now fierce, now desultory, of money poured out and engulfed, of ruin and desolation, ending in the complete wreck of the English cause in France. Ten years before Louis' accession came the Wars of the Roses in England to split the forces of the ancient enemy and to give France a breathing space. ("It is not to be doubted," observes Commynes truly, "that if the English had been in the position they were formerly, this kingdom of France would have been kept very busy—*eut eu beaucoup d'affaires*.") When Louis came to the throne the Lancastrian troops of Henry VI had already been defeated at Northampton and at Towton Field, the gentle saint and mystic who had been crowned in Paris with such economic pomp in 1421 was a prisoner in the Tower of London, his wife and child were refugees in Scotland, and Edward IV with his Yorkist lords and the great Warwick, Captain of Calais, held London and the English Crown. In Warwick, *Warrich, Warouych, Varvhic*—the spelling of his name gives Louis XI's secretaries frequent trouble—and in the handsome nineteen-year-old King, Edward of York, Louis is to find antagonists worthy of him: Warwick on the one hand, powerful, active, ruthless, politic, skilled in intrigue; Edward a superb general and a diplomat almost as subtle as Louis himself. Warwick, the victor in a sea-fight over the Spaniards in 1458, and again in 1459, is now as enormously popular with the English nation as has been, each in his time, St. Thomas of Canterbury, Nelson, Kitchener, and Charles Chaplin.

The year 1463 sees some exchange of defiances between Edward IV and Louis, some sporadic English attacks on Brittany and elsewhere, and the patching up of a temporary truce under the auspices of Philip, the aged Duke of Burgundy. The policy of Warwick, against whose domination Edward IV has already begun to react, while smoothly preserving outward appearances, is to maintain connection with France by marriages—by marrying Edward to a French princess, or alternatively by marrying Edward's sister Margaret to a French prince. In both schemes he is defeated; and while he is being splendidly welcomed and flattered by Louis in 1468, Edward IV marries his sister to Charles the Rash of Burgundy, signs a treaty with the Duke of Brittany, and begins mustering the English fleet. An invasion of France is imminent.

In England meanwhile the civil wars continue. The huge ambition of Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, champion of the House of York and actual ruler of England, is aiming at the English crown for his family. Having extracted a promise from Margaret, Henry VI of Lancaster's Queen (now a refugee with her child in France), that the Prince of Wales shall marry Anne Neville, his daughter, Warwick, having been defeated by Edward IV in Lincolnshire and forced to seek Louis' hospitality (1470), chooses the moment when Edward is occupied with a northern rising to land in Kent, aided by Louis' gold, and raise the country. The result is bewilderingly swift. Edward, taken by surprise, deserted by Lord Montagu, his chief support, handicapped by the popularity of Warwick with the English people, is forced to fly with a few faithful friends to the Low Countries, to the protection of Burgundy, and Warwick produces Henry VI, now to be his relative, from the

Tower and sets him on the throne again. This is excellent news for Louis XI, who duly returns thanks to Our Lady. A ten years' peace treaty, an alliance against Burgundy is signed with Henry VI . . . and then, suddenly, seven months later, Edward IV lands in Yorkshire, marches on London, and meets Warwick and his troops at Barnet. Six hours' bitter carnage ends in the death of the King-Maker; the captivity of Margaret and the death of her son follow the battle of Tewkesbury in May, 1471, and a little later Henry VI, sweet saint among so many tigers of treachery and cruelty, pious founder of the College of Our Lady of Eton and King's College, Cambridge, enters Paradise by way of violent death in the Tower.[10]

Now Louis XI may look for trouble from England and Burgundy, and foresees it, and takes his precautions. The constitutional traditions of the English are in Louis' favor here, for Edward IV cannot begin a war without the consent of the English Parliament (Commynes' admiration for this aspect of English conservatism is frankly expressed in his Memoirs), and the voting of supplies; this will take some little time, enough to give Louis the breathing-space he wants.

The storm clouds gather steadily and burst at last. In the spring of 1475 a strong English army descends on Calais from Dover. Louis, working in furious haste but never losing his head, has by this time assembled his troops, seen to the defenses of Normandy, Guyenne, Poitou, and the Somme, equipped a fleet, taken three strong places from the Burgundians. Happily the foolish adventure of Neuss is now occupying Charles the Rash, against whom Louis has made alliances with the Swiss and the Emperor. The transport of the English, in five hundred flat-bottomed boats, takes some three or four weeks. In July

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[10] The preliminaries of the cause of his beautification were recently taken up at Rome by a group of Old Etonians.

Louis hears that Edward has landed, receives Edward's letter formally calling on him to hand over the Kingdom of France, and replies to the herald in smooth and subtle words, blaming the ambition of Burgundy and the cupidity of the English merchants and nobles for this invasion. The English advance, none too enthusiastically, cross the Somme, and are repelled from St. Quentin; and Burgundy, who has given up the siege of Neuss to help his allies, suddenly relinquishes this design also. Louis dispatches a herald [11] to the English. His points are clear: he has no object but peace between the two nations; Burgundy is using the King of England for his own purposes; nobody on either side wants this war, and if Edward will agree there can be an amicable solution. Next day the ambassadors of both Kings meet half-way between the armies, at a village near Amiens, and before long the terms are agreed: the payment of 72,000 crowns down by Louis to Edward, the payment of several other pensions to English lords, a promise of marriage between the Dauphin and the English princess Elizabeth (with Guyenne to her dowry), and some commercial clauses; with these, a nine years' peace. Burgundy rushes back, protests hotly to Edward, and is rebuffed, and the two part coldly.

And now in Amiens takes place a rich scene, Rabelaisian in its *décor*. It is the object of Louis to put the English in a good humor; and he knows that one way, the best way to make *ces goddons,* these Goddams, good-humored is to fill them with food and wine. In the street of Amiens, by the city gate, two huge tables are spread—Louis has already sent to the English King a baggage-train of three hundred barrels of fine wine—with wine and enormous quantities of food. Behind the tables stand a picked company of stout and rosy Frenchmen, all noble; and as the English, in arms but not in order, approach the gate of Amiens they stare round-eyed at the feast and at their hosts. The French King's men invite the English to fall to; there are also, it seems, ten taverns in the city at their disposal, brimfull of food and wine, without charge of any kind. *Lanstrinque, à toy, compaing, de hait, de hait!* The English roll joyously to and fro, eating and drinking and shouting and singing, and like Mr. Jorrocks, sleep where they dine. For three or four days the bounty continues; the French King is hospitality itself. One would like to see his expression and read his thoughts as he contemplates his guests. It is Commynes who, after the feasting has been in progress a day or two, begins to feel some disquiet at the presence in Amiens of some nine thousand English soldiers on holiday, all armed, nearly all drunk, and expressing themselves disrespectfully towards their King; and so Commynes goes early in the morning to Louis' lodging, and finds him tranquilly reading the psalms of the day in his Book of Hours. Louis is not greatly perturbed by Commynes' fears. Nevertheless he approves of Commynes' making a tour of inspection in the company of the Seigneur de Gie with a view to assessing the danger, if any. "We went," says Commynes, "into a tavern where there had already been a hundred and eleven calls for drink, although it was not yet nine in the morning. The house was full; some of the clients were singing, others were asleep and drunk. When I saw this it seemed clear to me that there was no peril at all." Louis nevertheless took the wise precaution of naving two or three hundred men-at-arms ready for any trouble that might break out; but his guests seem to have been more noisy than quarrelsome. It was the King of England who, having been informed at length of his troops' disorderly behavior, delivered Amiens of their society; he felt ashamed of them, says Commynes—*en eut honte.*

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[11] Here is an example of Louis' calculated eccentricities. The herald is not a regular herald, one of that stately and exclusive college attached to the Crowns of Europe and representative of their dignity, but a makeshift, a valet (not a flunkey, but a member of the Household) named Mérichon. Mérichon is fitted out with a hastily-cut coat of arms made from a trumpet-banner, placed on a horse, and despatched to the English headquarters, where he acquits himself extremely well. One looks for Louis' motive. It might be this: if this man were roughly received by the English there would be no insult to the French Crown, since he was not a recognized herald, and the incident would not lead to the breaking off of negotiations which would otherwise inevitably and essentially follow.

It is Commynes also who describes the interview of August 29 between the two Kings which follows the feasting at Amiens. The place chosen is Picquigny, three leagues away in the marshes, where a bridge is thrown across the Somme, having across the middle a stout trellis-partition of wood, so closely constructed that only an arm can be passed between its divisions. For this occasion Louis XI discards his usual drab clothes and wears regal costume, with a jeweled velvet cap; at his side is Commynes, similarly dressed, for Louis is taking no chances this day. The English army of some 15,000 men is drawn up in battle-formation on one side of the river, a body of 800 French on the other; and when Edward IV makes his appearance at the tryst on the bridge, a little later than Louis, both Kings make a low reverence and embrace each other through the partition. *"Monsieur mon Cousin,"* says Louis, "you are very welcome. There is no one in the world I have desired to see more than you, and I thank God very sincerely that we are met here with such good intent." To which courtesy Edward, the handsome and subtle, replies in the French of the English Court. With Edward is the Chancellor of England; with Louis, Commynes, the Cardinal Charles de Bourbon and the Duke, his brother. After a speech from the English Chancellor—introduced by one of those prophecies with which, says Commynes acidly, the English are never found unprovided, announcing that a great peace is due between France and England—the text of the treaty is brought forward, with a missal and the Cross; and both Kings take the oath to preserve a seven years' peace. The financial clauses have already been mentioned. Louis, to whom this truce is so expensive, is beaming and jocular, demonstrates *merveilleusement grant joye,* laughs and cracks jokes, pleasantly invites his dear brother of England to Paris, to see the lovely ladies there; and then, abruptly dismissing such frivolities, demands a private conference with Edward, at which Commynes is present; for Louis wishes to talk about the position of Burgundy and Brittany, both allies of the English. The talk is friendly, though indecisive; and the Kings separate. Edward takes the road for Calais with his army; the invitation to Paris has not been accepted, and Louis is not heartbroken. At the dinner Louis gives at Amiens next day to the leading English concerned in the treaty the English Chancellor assures him eagerly that some way can be found to enable the English King to spend a few days in the capital, at the French King's kind invitation; and Louis (says Commynes) makes no reply, but with an inscrutable visage turns to wash his hands. His own feeling in the matter he expresses in private to his faithful Commynes. The King of England is a *très beau Roy,* fond of the society of ladies. He might very well find in Paris some attractive hussy whose conversation would make him eager to return; and however fond we are of our dear English neighbors, we like them best on their own side of the Channel, for (adds Louis) some of Edward's predecessors have already spent much too much time on our side. Louis, whose interests lie elsewhere than in the love of women, sums up his man accurately. Edward IV, like some other men of high intelligence, extreme political ability, and ruthless decision, beguiles a great deal of his leisure with women, the merry wives of the burghers of London and his own beautiful mistress, Jane Shore; it is safer to keep such a *beau Roy* out of Paris.

So the English, the ancient and persistent enemy, are got out of France for seven years, bought off at a price which is heavy, but worth it. France may now have a chance of peace. Already Louis meditates a commercial treaty with England. The establishment, for the first time in France, of the devotion of the noontide *Ave Maria* testifies to Louis' gratitude to his Patroness for these blessings; and the King of England gets his money regularly, with consignments of the fine wines of France. All difficulties are regulated by arbitration; Louis himself sees to the punctual forwarding of Edward's pension, to the courteous reception of English ambassadors, to the extension of the French silk trade with England. In 1479 the seven years' truce is extended to a hundred years, at 50,000 crowns a year to the English; and Louis' last injunctions on his dying bed will underline the necessity of keeping this peace. It is not all smooth sailing. Maximilian of Austria tries at least once to make the English break their treaty: he is being worked on by Louis' implacable enemy, Margaret of York, widow of Charles the Rash, who is living in retirement in London: but these machinations come to nothing, and the peace holds. An apoplectic stroke carries off the handsome English King early in 1483. To his nephew and successor, Richard III, "Crook-Back," Duke of Gloucester, Louis at once dictates a letter: "If I can do you any service I will do it, with all my heart, for I am very desirous of your friendship"—*car je vueil bien avoir vostre amytié.*

Thus does Louis XI, having fought the ancient enemy in his youth, devise and perfect a bloodless plan of freeing French soil of their presence, at a stiff price, gladly paid. It is a business transaction pure and simple, for Louis' feelings towards the English have never been cordial. Did he not some years ago enlist Our Lady against them by making over to her, with a superb geſture, calculated to infuriate the English, the feudal homages of the town of Boulogne, which they then held? Now he has bought his peace, and henceforth Edward IV and he will exchange nothing but courtesies, gifts (English dogs for Louis), and commercial advantages, and for long years French and English ships saluting each other on the seas will be traders and not ships of war. Louis is the artificer of the Hundred Years' Peace. For this alone he would deserve a monument.

§ 5

From the declining years of this tireless worker may be singled out for examination a curious and harsh experiment.

The noble city of Arras, with its burghers half ruined by the wars, remained Burgundian after the fall of the House of Burgundy, proclaiming its allegiance to Marie, daughter of Charles the Rash. Louis XI, to whom Arras had juſt been given by Marie's envoys, despatched his faithful Commynes to the city to receive its submission. Commynes was rebuffed, and returned in disgrace. In March, 1477, Louis entered the *cité* of Arras—the old town, ſtrongly fortified, divided from the newer *ville* of Arras, which held out for Burgundy—and threatened the *ville* with his artillery; on which the burghers capitulated. The walls were deſtroyed, one or two traitors were executed, and the reſt amneſtied; but the harshness of the royal officers who held the town after Louis' departure on a punitive expedition againſt the rebel Flemings in Hainaut increased the bitterness and discomfort of the citizens, and in June, 1479, sympathetic aid given by Arras to Douai, then besieged by the royal troops, was the pretext for a harsh experiment which prefigures to a curious extent an incident under the Revolution.

The King decides to punish Arras once and for all by expelling its entire population and re-peopling the city with picked and loyal subjects; and the new city, equipped with every kind of commercial privilege, with its new population, shall be known no longer as Arras but as *Franchise*—"Liberty." A little over three hundred years later the Jacobins, executing a fearful vengeance against the rebellious great town of Lyons, will order it to be razed to the ground and its name to be changed to *Commune-Affranchie,* the Freed Township. But as Carlyle observes, "Towns are not built of soap-froth; Lyons town is built of stone. Lyons, though it rebelled against the Republic, *is* to this day."

Louis' repressive experiment also failed. The new population, the three thousand *ménagiers,* heads of families and skilled craftsmen elected by their own towns, who were to make Arras the most prosperous and loyal city of the North, were not enthusiastic over their uprooting; nor were their towns too ready to lose them. Trade went badly, and some of the *ménagiers* were reduced to selling their household goods and even to asking alms from their former homes. Louis remained stubborn and harsh, demanding new blood; and this time the towns sent citizens of less quality, old men, poor men, invalids, men under the shadow of the law. Franchise—the new name must soon have tasted of irony—remains paralyzed and ruined, and, worse still, is swept by an epidemic; before long its population will be existing on charity. The cloth and linen trade which was to have been revived in the city more prosperously than ever before—each length to be stamped officially with an *F* and the fleur-de-lys—and which was to have broadcast its products, entirely tax-free and otherwise protected and encouraged, throughout the length and breadth of the country, fails to rise from its ashes. Louis is beaten, and is forced to restore to the city (whose new name he doggedly enforces, however) its municipal government: among the aldermen is Jehan du Lis, *dit* La Pucelle, a relative of St. Joan. But this is not enough, and in 1482 the old order is completely restored, under the ægis of the Dauphin: the pressed inhabitants of Franchise are free to return to their homes, and in 1484 Charles VIII allows the former inhabitants of Arras to return.

Three motives were behind this experiment: the desire to punish, the terrible stubbornness of the idealist in old age, and the good weal of France. The last, perhaps, as ever, the strongest.

From the punishment of Arras it is a natural transition to the iron cages, delight of the melodramatists. Reading their pages, one would imagine that Louis had Chinese blood. The greater part of their horrifics are pure literature.

It is a fact that iron cages were used by Louis XI for the detention of two or three important prisoners, but it is not a fact that he invented them. Alexander the Great used a cage for the philosopher Callisthenes, and was probably not the inventor. They were used in Italy in the earlier middle ages. Some fifty years before Louis the English had used a cage at Château-Gaillard for Charles VI's general, the *preux chevalier* Barbazan. The English also caged St. Joan, heavily chained, at the Château of Rouen before her trial; and cages have been used since in France, by the Prussians in 1815. Whether or not they implied cruelty may be seen as their exact description and the method utilizing them unfold. One turns naturally to Commynes for this, since he speaks with authority. Commynes says: "It is true that he (Louis) had made for him some rigorous prisons, in the shape of cages of iron, and others of wood strengthened with iron plates inside and out, with terrible bars, the whole of some eight feet in length and breadth, and as high as a man with one foot added. The first to occupy one of these was the Bishop of Verdun, who was placed immediately in the first one made and stayed there for fourteen years. Since then many have cursed him (Louis), including myself, who tasted this experience under the present King for eight months. Before this he had caused to be made by Germans some very heavy and terrible irons for the feet; they had a ring for the single leg, difficult to open, like a pillory, and a thick and heavy chain with a large iron ball at the end, much heavier than was reasonably necessary: and these irons were called 'the King's little daughters' (*les fillettes du Roy*)."

And Commynes, with his usual sense of equity, adds immediately: "On the other hand I have seen a great many men of worth, his prisoners, wearing these irons on their feet, who have exchanged them for great honor and joy, and have since received great benefits from him—among others the son of Monseigneur de la Gruthuse, a Fleming, taken in battle, whom my said Lord gave in marriage and made his chamberlain and Seneschal of Anjoy, presenting him with a hundred lances. Also the Seigneur de Piennes, a war prisoner, and the Seigneur de Vergy: both had men at arms from him and have remained his chamberlains, or those of his son. . . ." And Commynes continues with other names of Louis' beneficiaries who had once worn his fetters. Louis XI was capable of benevolence, even of kindness and indulgence;[12] if he punished harshly, it was punishment dealt to traitors and men dangerous to his work. In that age of châteaux-prisons, too, men could break prison, so that the question of security was important. And when the accretions of legend have been cut away it may be seen that the misfortune of his caged birds has been grossly exaggerated. The Bishop of Verdun, Guillaume de Haraucourt, is the most important, and has afforded Victor Hugo[13] one of his most purple episodes. There is the voice sobbing in the shadows, there are the pale faces of the King's attendants and the stony unconcern of Monsieur Louis de France himself, checking the carpenters' bill to the lugubrious accompaniment. "Fourteen years, Sire! In the name of the holy Mother of God, listen to me! . . . Mercy, Sire! I did not betray your Majesty, it was Monsieur d'Angers!" And Louis, impassive, ignoring the piteous appeal, questions another item of the bill.

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[12] The Burgundian Molinet, who hated Louis, admits that he was the kind of man who would without hesitation spend 10,000 crowns to spare the blood of a single one of his archers. See, *post*, his letter ordering a comfortable job to be found for one of his disabled veterans.

The scene is what is called "good theater," but otherwise more than doubtful. In any case Haraucourt, Bishop of Verdun, had entirely deserved exemplary punishment. He was a politician, a place-seeker who in his time had served René of Anjou, Louis XI, his brother Charles, and Brittany, in each case without realizing expected fortune; and he had been involved with Cardinal Balue in the treacherous game of playing off Charles of France against Louis. Haraucourt had assured Charles secretly in 1468 that if he insisted on being given the appanage of Champagne instead of Guyenne the nobles would rally to him. In this assurance he was joined by Balue, who had been under a cloud since the Péronne affair and had been recently expelled by Louis from the Council. A letter of Balue's was intercepted by Louis' agents, and the apparent attempt to raise a second League revealed. Haraucourt made a full confession and was sent to the Bastille, to be clapped into a cage nine feet long, eight broad, and seven high.[14] There is no evidence that he ſtayed in this cage till his release, or that his imprisonment was more harsh than his crime and the custom of the age warranted, especially when the punishment of Balue, his principal in the plot, a man who owed his whole career to Louis, is considered; for Balue was not, according to the available evidence, shut up in a cage,[15] unless it was a barred-off room in the Château of Onzain or of Loches, and was able to devote himself tranquilly to the ſtudy of law and theology for ten hours a day and to dispose of benefices in his charge; nor did his long imprisonment affect him either mentally or bodily, since on his release after eleven years' detention he was able at once to remake his career. It is the hyſteria of the first years of the Revolution, in which (at Angers in 1792) one of these cages was exhibited and burned as an inſtrument of the vile tyranny of kings, which has swollen the legends concerning them. The student of hiſtory may compare with these the ſtill current superſtitions which enwrap the ſtory of Galileo's "imprisonment" by the Inquisition; or, even more, the superſtitions of the uninformed concerning the Inquisition itself. It is not only the hiſtory of Louis XI's reign which has needed re-writing. Three hundred years of ignorance, distortion, and stout Froudian lying rise like a Great Wall of China between the modern Englishman and the Catholic England of his fathers. But it is cracking.

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[13] Who, incidentally, blunders in calling the cages *fillettes du Roi.*

There can be no doubt that the cages supplied to Louis' order fulfilled their intention. The one which enclosed another traitor, Jacques de Nemours, in the Bastille—there are grounds for doubting that Nemours occupied it for more than one night—employed the labor of nineteen workmen for twenty days, and required more than three thousand pounds' weight of iron. The age required such things. Most of the cry of cruelty against Louis in this respect has come from those who—as is a common habit—look at the fifteenth century with the eyes of the nineteenth and twentieth. It is to be noted particularly that those few who suffered thus by Louis' hand were the great, and not the small, and as regards imprisonment generally in this age a good case may be made out for it as compared with the modern hygienic devilishness of solitary confinement. In the fifteenth century men were at least not deprived of the company of their fellows in misery, and the injunction of Scripture and the Church, which makes visiting the captive one of the seven corporal works of mercy, was understood and obeyed. As one example of this in Louis' reign, there are seventeen political prisoners in the prison of the Château of Tours in 1482. These prisoners are, so to speak, the protégés of the citizens of Tours; the mayor himself visits them several times; they are supplied with bread, meat, and wine at the town's expense, and live thus on Christian charity.

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[14] He was released in 1482 and became Bishop of Vintimille, near Nice. On Louis' death he returned to his see of Verdun, and died in 1500.

[15] A cage, larger than Haraucourt's, was ordered for Balue, but there is no evidence that he ever occupied it. No contemporary hiſtorian recording Balue's fall mentions that he was caged; among these writers is one Robert Duval, a canon of Chartres, who addressed to Balue on his release in 1480 a long Latin letter of congratulation, deploring his fate. It seems possible that the ſtory of Balue's cage is an invention of the seventeenth century.

In the consideration of judicial severities there commonly prevails a tendency to blacken the Middle Ages. Actually there is little to choose in this matter between any centuries up to the end of the eighteenth. Under Louis XI recalcitrant prisoners were subjected to the Question by Water, under Elizabeth and the Jacobeans to the Rack and the Boot. Under Louis a criminal might be burned or broken on the wheel; under Elizabeth and her immediate successors the punishment for saying Mass was to be hanged until half-strangled, to be cut down alive, castrated, and ripped up, after which the heart was torn out and burned and the body quartered. Women were burned at the stake at Salem, Massachusetts, in the seventeenth and in England until nearly the end of the eighteenth century. Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer, Protestants, gladly burned men at the stake when they got the chance. It was the Lutheran civic council of Nuremberg, among others, which impaled its prisoners on the deadly spikes of the "Iron Virgin" in the sixteenth century. There is little to choose between the centuries in which human fiber was tougher than our own; and certainly the charge of essential and rooted cruelty brought against Louis XI in his own time by his political enemies must be allowed to dwindle when duly considered with a sense of proportion.

M. Pierre Champion, indeed, declares firmly that Louis XI was not cruel. With deference I would permit myself very slightly to qualify the judgment. Louis, a generous friend and master, was of such a temper that if a trusted man betrayed him he straightway became a tiger. Such traitors were St. Pol, Nemours, Melun, Balue, Haraucourt, three of whom went to the scaffold, from which the sacred office of the other two alone saved them. It is not cruelty to execute traitors, but necessary justice: neither is it cruelty to make an example of would-be poisoners like Ythier Marchant and his tool Jehan Hardi. Nevertheless there is a point at which Louis' energy in repressing disorder merges into technical cruelty, with mitigating circumstances. Thus the leaders of a popular revolt at Angers against a new tax in 1461, Louis' first year as king, are beheaded or drowned; the town of Avesnes in Hainault is razed to the ground in 1477; the disobedient inhabitants of Arras are expelled. But in the one case there is the vital *chose publicque* to be upheld at all costs, in the other, it is war: and it ill becomes a modern to criticize Louis' methods of waging war, seeing that modern science has developed the art of warfare into long-distance poisoning of civilians.

There is certainly calculated cruelty in Louis' long persecution of Thomas Basin, Bishop of Lisieux; Basin had thwarted Louis' designs against his father, and had later stood out for Norman independence. For ten years Louis pursues this honest and unfortunate prelate with a cold ferocity which employs small persecutions equally with great. But here again one might say that in Basin's case, from Louis' personal and warped point of view, there had been a betrayal. Again, if Louis was pitiless to some who betrayed him, he was not so to all. Antoine de Chabannes, Comte de Dammartin, his friend, had refused him help and had given him the lie-direct in his plot to unseat Charles VII. Louis had been instantly expelled by Charles into Dauphiny, and Chabannes had pursued him in arms, at Charles VII's order. On ascending the throne Louis swore to throw Chabannes' heart to his dogs. Chabannes fled, then gave himself up rather than go over to the English, and Louis took him into favor again permanently and made him one of his most trusted servants. Similarly with Pierre de Brézé, Seneschal of Normandy. Similarly with an obscure man, one Antoine Dutau, who sold Louis' secrets, was pardoned, and received favors.

Louis was not cruel in grain. He was a man with whom (to echo Commynes yet again) it behoved one to drive straight; not in one's own sense, but in Louis', and no other. There was only one master in France, and he was Louis: a master absolute.

§6

The last phases of the life of this man are worthy of contemplation.

In the March of 1479, while he is at the little château of Forges, near Chinon in Touraine, Louis has a sudden stroke while sitting at dinner after Mass, and loses his speech, but recovers before long and resumes his work. In March 1481 a second stroke occurs at Plessis-les-Tours; a much severer stroke, so dangerous that Louis, who can indicate his orders only by signs, sends for a confessor and for Commynes, who comes in haste and finds him seated at table with two doctors, Adam Fumée, diplomat, formerly physician to Charles VII, and Claude de Moulins, physician to the Dauphin. Louis has now slightly recovered, but his speech and hearing are still affected: he makes his brief confession to the priest in the presence of Commynes, and a few days later, rousing from his languor, demands the names of those of his servants who have kept him by force in his house, and expels them. And once more the indefatigable worker returns to his task, demanding the latest despatches and indicating his replies, though he can still scarcely articulate clearly. Commynes observes significantly that during these days it was thought wiser not to expedite this business, but to wait for the King's recovery, for he was not a man of whom advantage could be taken with impunity. He recovers, resumes harness, reorganizes the army, attends to a complicated menace coming from Maximilian of Austria, receives with respect and congratulation the Papal envoys bearing the bulls of Sixtus IV for a three years' universal truce throughout Christendom, and closely examines the same. In September 1481 a third stroke attacks him at Tours, accompanied as before by loss of speech and—a new symptom—by complete loss of consciousness for two hours, so that his servants think him dead. But he recovers, relatively, once more, and as soon as he can sit in the saddle he is off again about his business, snatching, as is his lifelong habit, what leisure he can for the chase. He visits St. Claude in Burgundy at this time, among his other pilgrimages, and gives the great noble vineyard of Beaune to the church of Our Lady of Cléry. He is a sick man: his great heart, says Commynes, alone keeps him going (*son grant cueur le portoit*); nevertheless he continues tirelessly to transact business of every complicated kind—business with the Flemings, with the Catalonians, with the Angevins and the Provençaux. This year he gathers in Maine and Provence for the Crown, and lays a strong hand on Anjou. This year, too, he writes to the Sultan of Egypt recommending the royal galleys *Notre-Dame Sainte-Marie* and *Saint Martin,* which are sailing to Alexandria and Beyrouth, and begins developing schemes for world-wide commerce. In this year, also, he orders his learned physician Pierre Choisnet to compose for his son Charles, the Dauphin, that manual and treatise of the craft of kingship called "The Rosebush of War" (*Le Rozier des Guerres*)[16] which is to inculcate the value of peace; and a year later Louis himself, ill though he is, instructs his twelve-year-old son personally in his duties, his privileges, and his responsibilities to God and to France. The lecture takes place at Amboise, where the child is living, closely guarded and surrounded by precautions of every kind; and when the young Charles has listened his father interrogates him, sends him to repeat his lesson to some of the royal officials present, finally makes him take the oath to obey. "Charles, since for love of Us you will do this, raise your hand." And the proceedings are duly set down by a notary and registered by Parliament.

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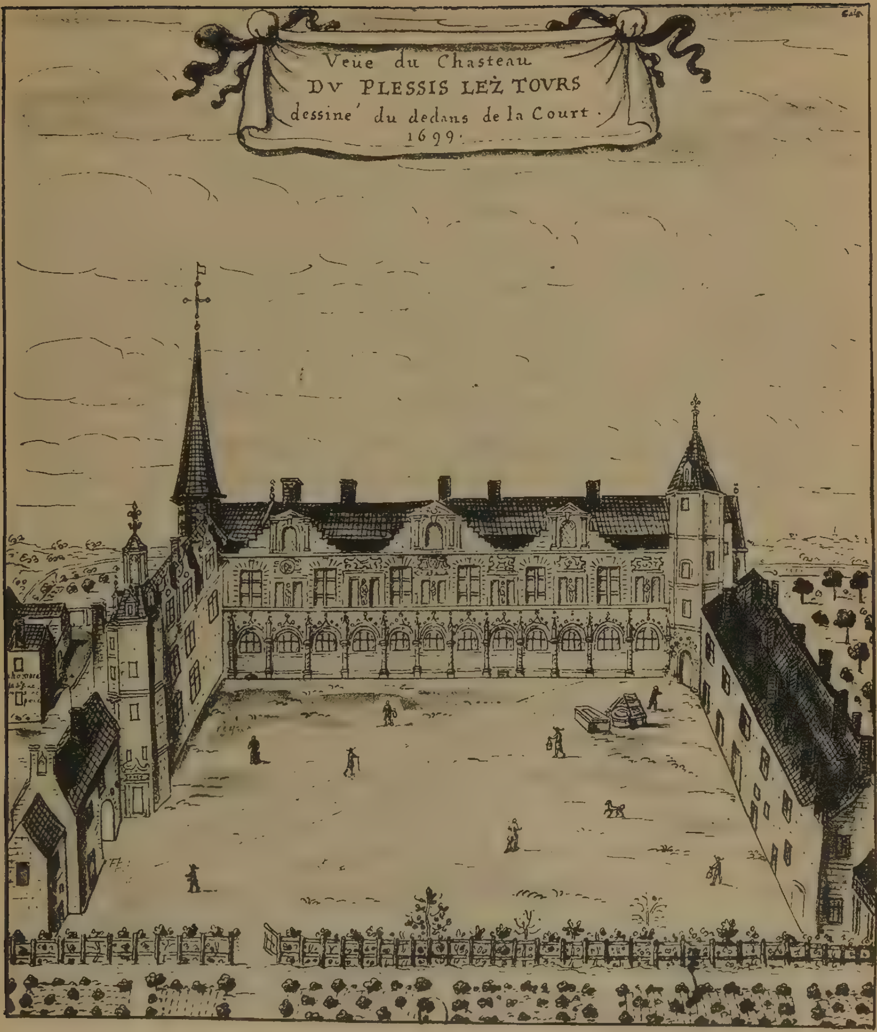
[16] See Appendix B.


Veüe du Chasteau
DV PLESSIS LEŻ TOVRS
dessiné du dedans de la Court.
1699.

THE ROYAL MANOR OF PLESSIS-LES-TOURS
Showing the Courtyard, the King's Gallery and the Outer Walls

From a Print of 1699

Throughout these last years Louis XI, though still constantly traveling, has made his principal home in the neighborhood of his favorite and favored city of Tours, in his beloved Touraine: the house is at Plessis, very near; it is a pleasant manor, well built and well furnished, guarded by two towers, moats, and a postern; there are in it bathrooms, a billiard-room, a library, an aviary, a park full of all kinds of animals, and a chapel, decorated very simply by Jehan Bourdichon of Tours. In the King's chamber are three silver-gilt chandeliers, two pictures, his portable clock, his bath, his bed, and some bird-cages. There are cushions for his favorite dogs. The furnishing of the whole house is not luxurious, but comfortable enough for a man who has spent his whole life on the roads of France. Towards 1482 Louis' increasing ill-health and tenacious hold on life and the sceptre of France caused him to make significant changes in his mode of living. He turned the manor of Plessis-les-Tours into a closely-guarded fortress: all around the outer enclosure (says Commynes) he built a trellis of thick iron bars, and encrusted the outer walls with many-pointed iron spikes set in the masonry. He also had constructed four watch-towers, all of thick iron, from which could be commanded an easy field of fire; "a triumphant piece of work, which cost him more than twenty thousand francs." Here he placed forty arbalestriers, who kept guard day and night, having orders to fire on any person approaching Plessis by night until the opening of the gate in the morning. These towers were placed one at each corner of the square. The gate was closed at dusk and opened at eight o'clock every morning and the drawbridge lowered; at that time the guards were changed. No person was permitted to enter the *enceinte* of Plessis unless he belonged to the household or held a pass from the King.

The reason for this excessive precaution is given by Commynes. Louis did not fear an invasion, but "he feared lest some seigneur, or many, should endeavor to take the place, half by affection and half by force, and take over the authority, and force him to exist like a man deprived of sense and unworthy to govern."

It is this fear, founded on pride of achievement and stubborn will-power, which sustains Louis from now to his death. To defeat the rumors of his decay the emaciated old man, suffering from the physical and mental depressions of what are now periodical attacks of his disease, which is commonly believed from the symptoms to have been epilepsy,[17] strives to conceal their ravages, discards his simple clothing for rich gowns of cramoisy satin furred with marten, and will not for a moment relax his grip on business. His renewed purchases of horses and dogs at this time are significant. He enlarges his menagerie in the park of Plessis from sources as far apart as Barbary and Sweden. He continues to hold in his withered hands the threads of policy, domestic and foreign. But he is very ill. Commynes observes that he has given up talking—this man who has been loquacious all his life. Even when the envoys of foreign potentates gratify him with some new animal for his park he hardly utters a word.

Now the shadows are definitely closing round him; the withered, moribund, dogged old man. He fears death; possibly as that other devout man Samuel Johnson feared it, not for itself but for what comes after it, and again from jealousy for his life's work. But he will not give up the fight yet. He has already towards the end of 1482 cast around for some means of warding off death for a time. He sends to the

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[17] An alternative modern theory is that Louis' illness was caused by a cerebral overflow (*épanchement cérébral*) and apoplexy. Dr. Brachet (*Pathologie mentale des Rois de France*) diagnoses arthritis, dermatitis, and neurosis.

Dominicans of Troyes to discover the tomb of a *bon sainct homme hermite* who had predicted to Charles VII his victory over the English. He writes to the Pope asking for the canonization of this holy man, Jehan de Gand, a hermit of St. Claude; and Sixtus sends him the Corporal which St. Peter used at Mass. He writes to the Chapter of St. Laud at Angers, asking for a list of miracles performed by the relic of the True Cross in their keeping. He asks Lorenzo de Medici to send him the ring of St. Zenobius, about whose authenticity he has strictly inquired some time before. He orders a daily Mass for sixty days at St. Laud, "as of Christmas, with lights and ringing," for peace and the King's good estate. But above all he is anxious to have by him the Ampulla of Rheims.[18] In his eyes this phial of the Oil of Sacring, which anointed so many kings before him, is the august mystical symbol of the glory of France, and of his own high calling. Its anointing may yet prolong his days.

He therefore sends in April, 1482, to the Abbot of St. Rémy at Rheims, custodian of the Ampulla, begging for a tiny drop, *une petite goutte,* of the sacred Oil, and asking if it is possible to extract such a drop from the phial without sacrilege or danger.

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[18] The historic Ampulla of Rheims, containing the Oil of Coronation, was a slim, tear-shaped crystal phial some 40 millimeters long, with an orifice of 16 millimeters, contained in an oval reliquary of silver-gilt encrusted with jewels, with a golden dove midway holding the reliquary in his claws. A silver chain was attached whereby the Abbot of St. Rémy, guardian of the Ampulla, brought it to the cathedral for coronations, suspended from his neck. According to the legend St. Rémy, Bishop of Rheims, received the phial miraculously from a dove at the baptism of Clovis, the first Christian King of France, on Christmas Day 496. The minute quantity of the sacred Oil used at coronations was extracted with a slender gold spatula and mixed with the Chrism on a paten. After being used at thirty-five coronations and more and venerated for thirteen hundred years the Ampulla was smashed to pieces on October 7, 1793, by the Citizen Rulh, Representative of the People, but according to the then Curé of St. Rémy a small amount of its precious contents—long since coagulated into a brownish mass—had been secretly extracted before the Ampulla was handed over. With this the Archbishop of Rheims anointed Charles X at his coronation in 1825.

The Abbot will not permit this. Louis therefore writes anxiously to the Pope asking his sanction to remove the Ampulla, and it is granted. In July, 1483, a royal letter reaches the Chapter of Rheims Cathedral announcing this and adding that three envoys, Estienne Goupillon, Bishop of Séez, Claude de Montfaulcon, Governor of Auvergne, and Jehan de Sandouville, Seigneur de la Heuze, are on their way to Rheims to escort the precious phial,

> *"le plus honnestement que pouront. Et affin que ne fassiez quelque doubte ou difficulté de la bailler, de crainte que ne vous la fassions rendre et remettre en voz mains, et que vous soyez plus asseurez de nostre entencion et vouloir, nous vous promettons, en parolle de roy et sur nostre honneur, qu'en la baillant à nosdiz conseillers, qu'après que l'aurons veue et icelle venerée, nous vous la renvoyrons et referons reconduire diligemment et reveremment sans nulle faute."*

> [as honorably as they may. And in order that you may make no doubt or difficulty in handing it to them, for fear that We may not have it brought back to you and replaced in your hands, and in order that you may be reassured as to Our will and intention, We promise you, on the word of a King and on Our honor, that when you have handed it over to Our aforesaid counselors, We will, after contemplating and venerating it, have it returned to you diligently and reverently, without fail.]

The same letter is sent to the Abbot; and on July 31 the Ampulla, enclosed in a small casket covered with a cloth of gold, is taken in the charge of two canons and two monks from Rheims to Paris. At St. Antoine-des-Champs it is met by the Parliament, clergy, and notables of Paris, with countless wax torches, flowers, banners, and all reverence. A procession escorts it to the Sainte-Chapelle, whence next day, together with two other relics, the Cross of Victory of Charlemagne and the Rod of Moses, it is conveyed with great solemnity to Plessis, and there placed on the buffet in the King's chamber.

But during these negotiations Louis has turned to other sources. From the Medici he has heard of a hermit in Calabria, a man of the greatest simplicity and holiness named Francesco de Paula; long since raised to the Church's altars. This man, whom Sir Walter Scott briskly calls "an ignorant crack-brained peasant, who from laziness probably had shut himself up in a cave and . . . did not possess the slightest tincture of letters"[19]—the Twelve Apostles having notoriously been Old Etonians, Classical Dons, and scions of the English County Families—is sufficiently independent of the flesh and absorbed in the spirit to support existence on water, roots, and a little fruit. His sanctity is a byword throughout Italy. Here, thinks Louis, clinging desperately to life, is one whose prayers may avail with Almighty God in my behalf. . . . And in February, 1483, a Royal order goes out to the council of Lyons ordering them to construct a chariot and a litter for the hermit, who will arrive shortly, and to receive him (adds a further royal order in March) with as much honor as if he were the Pope himself.

Francesco de Paula, prevailed on to leave his seclusion, takes ship from Naples to Marseilles and thence up the Rhône, reaching Lyons on April 24. He is escorted by the Ambassador of the King of Naples and two high officers of Louis' household. The authorities of Lyons receive him with gifts of fruit; he stays two days in the town, at the sign of the *Griffin,* and goes on to Roanne, and thence down the Loire to Tours. He arrives at Plessis, and the King, overjoyed, begs his prayers for the prolongation of his life. The hermit, unlettered peasant as he is, replies like an inspired man and a scholar, bidding the King throw himself on the mercy of God. He speaks only Italian, and an interpreter is necessary. Louis endows him at once with an annual pension and a chapel, but Francesco's needs are much fewer; he requires only roots for his food and a rush-mat to sleep on. Nevertheless in the June of that year we find Louis ordering a basket of lemons, oranges, pears, and parsnips for the refreshment of "the holy man who touches neither flesh nor fish." In his suspicious, eccentric manner Louis has put Francesco to several tests. He offers the hermit dishes and goblets of gold and silver; Francesco calmly puts them aside and asks for a bowl and platter of wood. Louis has an image of Our Lady cast in gold and again offers it; Francesco advises him to keep it, or else to sell it for the benefit of the poor, explaining that he already has a picture of Our Lady on paper, which suffices him. Finally Louis, to put the hermit to a final test, offers him rich food, chiefly fish of a delicate and plump kind. Francesco turns aside in his gentle manner and asks for his accustomed roots; by which time Louis is satisfied, and tests him no more. The hermit's position at Court is not altogether agreeable; for apart from the glitter and bustle and (as it seems to him) enormous luxury and pomp, some of the King's servants laugh at this strange, humble figure in their midst, with his roots and his rush-mat and his long hours of absorption in prayer.

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[19] *Quentin Durward,* Introduction.

In June, 1483, Sixtus IV despatches two briefs to Francesco ordering him to make unremitting prayer for the restoration of Louis to health: in the event of his omitting to do so the penalty will be excommunication. But there is no occasion for disciplinary action. Francesco de Paula is a saint. He will never see his Italy again, the humble good man. After Louis' death he remains at Plessis, traveling only a little to find some houses of his Order in France. He dies at Plessis in 1508, at the age of 91, and is canonized in 1519. His body, entombed in the monastery of Plessis, is burned to ashes by the Huguenots during their occupation of the Tours district in 1562, and only a few relics are saved. "Grant," runs the collect at the Mass of his feast-day, April 2, "that through his merits and the example of his life we may win the rewards Thou hast promised the lowly."

On August 28, 1483, Louis XI has a fresh stroke, affecting his brain and speech. His speech soon returns, but he is too weak almost to lift his hand. He has lately suffered pain in his head, and the pastoral music played outside his window by a band of peasants, as a charming passage in Jehan de Roye records, on *bas et doulx instruments* (low and sweet instruments), the pipe and flute principally, is no more of avail. Jehan de Roye adds that this music was for the purpose of preventing the King from sleeping (*pour le garder de dormir*), rather than for inducing sleep, for which soft music is a sovran drug comparable only with the plash of distant water, or poppies gathered under the waning moon. Robert Gaguin in his *Grants Croniques* is equally explicit. "He (Louis)," says Gaguin, "returned to Tours, where he thought of seeking relief by means of the harmony of music. For this reason he ordered performers of every kind of music to be sent for, who assembled, as some affirm, to the number of one hundred and twenty. Among these were a number of shepherds, who during several days played music not far from the King's chamber, to soothe him, and in order that he should not succumb to sleep, which greatly discomforted him (*et afin qu'il ne succombast au sommeil, qui moult le grevoit*)." One hears the thin sweet piping of rustic airs, one sees the grim withered face on the pillows.

Let us go back a moment to the beginning of this year, 1483. Louis' mind is working acutely, weary and ill as he is, and he is on the alert against death, encouraging the doctors he habitually distrusts, submitting to blood-transfusion (whence springs the horrific legend of his drinking infants' blood, promulgated by Gaguin), even despatching two ships to the Cape Verde Islands to seek "certain things very closely affecting the good and health of his person"—possibly, it has been deduced from a passage in Thomas Basin, turtles' blood, or possibly some exotic herbs. And in the archives of Tours there is a curious evocation of a night-piece in the shape of an order from the King that the inhabitants are to go out at night on the road and the river with torches, to intercept certain persons known to be carrying turkeys (*oyseaulx de Turquie*) to Brittany, and to bring the birds to the King. This they do, at two in the morning. Is it for fresh transfusion? And, in parenthesis, does not the incident challenge the great Brillat-Savarin, who after long research laid it down finally in the *"Physiologie du Goût"* that the turkey (which he calls by its modern name, *coq d'Inde*) did not appear in France until the Jesuits imported it from North America towards the end of the seventeenth century? [20]

A significant act of Louis' is recorded in the April of this year, four months before his end. He orders a post-mortem on the body of one of his attendants supposed to have died from poison, and he also orders poison to be tried on a dog and its effects noted. It seems that he holds in his mind some lingering suspicion. His father had had the same. Obviously it is one outcome of his sickness and general eccentricity of late, since he shut himself up in Plessis. He has entered, observes Commynes, into a permanent state of extraordinary suspicion of all and sundry, *merveilleuse suspection de tout le monde*. On the recent occasion of the Dauphin's betrothal to Margaret of

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[20] I find further support for the earlier date in the drinking songs of Olivier Basselin of the Vaux de Vire, who compares his jolly nose to the crimson throat of a turkey (*coq d'Inde*). This was about contemporary with Louis XI, thinks La Monnoye: others say earlier, others later, but at any rate earlier than Brillat-Savarin's date.

Auſtria at Amboise Louis' son-in-law François d'Orléans, Comte de Dunois, visits the king at Plessis; and Louis, says Commynes, will not receive him before the captain of the guard has reported, after search, that Dunois has no arms concealed beneath his gown. If such suspicions seem morbid to excess, it may be recalled that there have been two clear attempts to assassinate Louis; one by Jehan Hardi in 1473, the other in 1478 at the inſtigation of Jehan de Chalon, Prince of Orange, whereby the corner of the altar-cloth which Louis was accuſtomed devoutly to kiss after hearing Mass was to be impregnated with deadly poisons.[21] And there are other obscurer inſtances of the murderous intentions of Louis' enemies which never ripened. But it appears that he has no grounds for his present preoccupation; and if he is eccentric he remains the King, he ſtrives to proclaim to all whom it may concern that he is ſtill alive, and maſter of France. Thus he sends to Spain, Naples, Brittany, and elsewhere for more sporting dogs; he ratifies the marriage-treaty between his thirteen-year-old son the Dauphin Charles and the daughter of Maximilian of Auſtria, a vital, sound and workmanlike treaty of peace, and orders *Te Deums,* processions, and bonfires to celebrate it; he orders a delegation of merchants to attend him in order to devise a means of eſtablishing throughout France, "if it be possible, one law, one syſtem of weights, one currency"; and the old man emerges from his retreat to receive these delegates at Plessis and to direct them to send to him in six weeks' time a representative from each of their towns to make known their decisions. This is his laſt appearance in public, and a ghaſtly enough figure he makes. He wears a gown of crimson velvet, furred with sable, coming midway down the leg, with two bonnets of scarlet on his bald head, on which a few gray hairs, cut short, may be seen as he lifts his double bonnet to the merchants.

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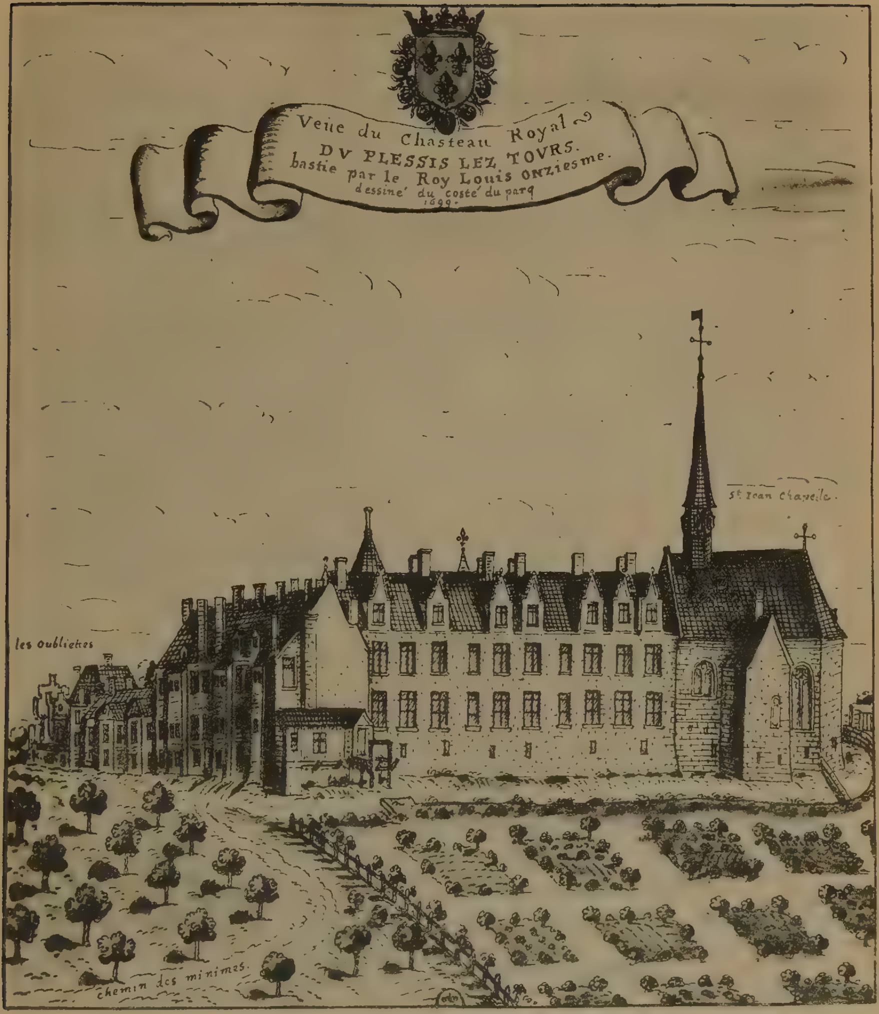
[21] See, *poſt,* Louis' letter announcing this poison-plot to the Parliament.

"Welcome, gentlemen, and thank you for having come to me. Pray be covered."

And as the assembly resumes its hats, the King, bareheaded, addresses them. His speech is brief and to the point. He wants three things, (1) free access for merchandise throughout France, as prevails in England, (2) reform of the laws and the abolition of long lawsuits and the consequent corruption of justice, (3) one law for the whole kingdom, one system of weights and measures, one currency. Thus he ends, holding his double bonnet in one meager claw, and the delegates salute him and retire.

His mind definitely runs on peace. Edward IV of England dies suddenly of apoplexy; Louis thereupon dictates a letter to the citizens of Harfleur ordering them to commit no hostile act against the English. He sends to the Duke of Milan expressing his wish for unity in Italy in order to prevail against enemies of the Catholic Faith. And I now quote Pierre Champion, commenting on Commynes: "For the last time he has shown that he is the master. He has brought about the long-desired marriage, he has swung to his side the citizens of Ghent and the Flemings, he has overawed François of Brittany, whom he detests, with the large army posted not far from his frontiers. He has the King of Spain on tenterhooks on the subject of the Roussillon and the Cerdagne, which he has bought from the King of Aragon. He corresponds with friendly powers in Italy. The Swiss are his allies, and the Kings of Scotland and Portugal also. Pope Sixtus IV sends him relics and the Corporal of St. Peter, which Louis will preserve. Bajazet, the Turk, has sent him a catalogue of relics at Constantinople, which he keeps


Veue du Chasteau Royal
DV PLESSIS LEZ TOVRS.
bastie par le Roy Louis ONziesme.
dessine' du coste' du parq
1699.
St. Jean Chapelle
les oubliettes
chemin des minimes.

THE ROYAL MANOR OF PLESSIS-LES-TOURS
Showing the Park and the Chapel

From a Print of 1699

for reference. His subjects tremble before their king, whom no one ever sees. . . . Never has he been so strong."

I have omitted one other indication of his indomitable energy in the face of death. In May he has broken his chancellor, Pierre Doriole, for failure to carry out orders, and dissimulation, and appointed Guillaume de Rochefort in his place.

We may return to the bed-chamber at Plessis. The date is August 28, 1483, and the King lies there, emaciated, weak, after his final cerebral stroke.

Louis' bedchamber is bright, and strewn with fresh roses, violets, marjoram, rosemary, and fragrant herbs. His favorite dogs lie near the bed. His eyes contemplate the scrolls painted round the walls at his order by Jehan Bourdichon of Tours in azure and gold, each scroll supported by angels and bearing the Psalmist's words, *"Misericordias Domini in æternum cantabo"* —"I will sing the mercies of the Lord forever." By his bedside is stationed his faithful Commynes. The King's servants bustle in and out and treat their master with uncustomary brusqueness—*briefves parolles et rudes,* says Commynes—taking their cue from Dr. Jacques Coictier. The hard visage of Coictier, whose salary alone is ten thousand crowns a month, looms over the sick old man: Coictier the avaricious, the indispensable, who has stuffed his bottomless pockets with a score of rich estates showered on him by Louis, actually bullies his master. "One would not," says Commynes, "use such outrageous language to a flunkey." "I know very well," rasps Dr. Coictier, "that one fine morning you will turn me out, like some others, but, by ——" (here, says Commynes, a huge oath which Coictier was accustomed to use) "—— you will not live a week longer." And the attendants adopt his tone. "Sire, it is all up with you (*il est faict de vous*),[22] look to your conscience, for there is no remedy." To which Louis answers mildly, "I trust God will aid me; perhaps I am not so sick as you imagine." But the tyrannical roughness of his favorite doctor, in whom he has blind confidence, frightens the King in his weak state, and he strives pathetically to mollify Coictier with compliments—which, observes Commynes drily, is a taste of Purgatory to him already.[23] Coictier is supreme, in the sick room and the household. He bullies not only the King but the gentle hermit Francesco, whom he has tried to turn out. "He was violent," says a witness in Francesco's beatification process at Rome, later, "against the Servant of God" (*servo Dei invidebat vehementer*). It is reasonable to assume that such scenes did not take place in Louis' presence, or within his hearing.

Louis has now no illusions. He summons his confessor and relieves his conscience; a matter soon despatched, since it has been his regular habit for years to use this sacrament once a week. He receives Absolution and Extreme Unction; outside on the pavement of the corridor a clash of halberds from the Guard and the warning bell announce the approach of the Viaticum, under Its canopy. With Its attendant wax-lights and the priest It enters the bedchamber. The King receives the Blessed Sacrament devoutly for the last time: the priest withdraws; Louis closes his eyes, absorbed in prayer. No plaint or word of fretfulness issues from him, nor will issue. Having prayed, he grows —as so often happens to the dying after the reception of the Last Sacraments—perceptibly stronger; his mind is clear, some

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[22] According to one account, this is said to Louis by Olivier le Daim.

[23] Certain medico-astrological personages were about the Court at this time, including Arnould des Marais, author of *Astrologia,* Simon de Phares, author of the *Catalogue of Astrologers,* and Conrad Hermengaster, author of a commentary on Ptolemy. In this year 1483, also, a German doctor named Sixtus was richly rewarded for ameliorating Louis' condition. None of these is present at the last scenes.

of his old vigor returns. His eyes rest, perhaps, once more on the Ampulla on his buffet, with whose royal anointing he would so gladly have begun his last journey; but this cannot be. He rouses from contemplation and issues an order in his old curt, dry manner. His son-in-law, Pierre de Bourbon, Sire de Beaujeu, hastens in, and the King speaks to him. He is to go to the young King Charles at Amboise. Then with a gesture Louis clears the room except for Commynes and gives Beaujeu, husband of the Regent Anne, his final instructions. The English are to be left alone. No dangerous adventures against Calais! The country needs peace for five or six years more at least. And let the Breton trouble be left alone also, till King Charles himself can deal with it. There must be *peace.*

He orders the Seals of the kingdom to be carried to his son at Amboise; with them are to go certain of the Guard, the royal archers and falconers. His next commands are for Messire Estienne de Vers, chevalier, First Groom of the Chamber and guardian of the Dauphin from babyhood. To him Louis speaks urgently, *plusieurs bonnes choses et notables.*

Meanwhile the end approaches. At the foot of the bed gather the saintly Francesco de Paula, a "theologian" whom Commynes does not name, but who is variously identified with Jehan de Rely, Canon of Paris, and Philippe, a monk of St. Martin, and one or two of the household clergy; in the deepening dusk they begin aloud the appointed prayers for a departing soul, the Litany, the *Kyrie.*

The King's brief fit of energy is passed, and he has sunk back on the pillows. His lips move constantly, his voice is audible.

"Proficiscere, anima christiana," says Francesco, raising his voice. "Go forth, Christian soul, out of this world, in the name of God the Father Almighty who created thee; in the name of Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, who suffered for thee; in

the name of the Holy Ghost, who sanctified thee; in the name of the holy and glorious Mary, Virgin Mother of God; in the name of the angels and archangels; in the name of the thrones and dominations; in the name of the principalities and powers. . . ."

The attendants answer *Amen*. The dying eyes seek once more the blazoned scrolls round the walls, the dying lips form the words painted there. *"Misericordias Domini in æternum cantabo,"*—"I will sing the mercy of the Lord forever." And Louis adds, faintly but distinctly, an invocation to Our Lady of Embrun: "My good Mistress, aid me!" And again, *"In te, Domine, speravi, non confundar in æternum,"*—"O Lord, in Thee have I hoped; let me not be confounded forever."

The voices of the priests continue.

"Remember not, Lord, we beseech Thee, the sins of his youth, and his ignorances; but according to Thy great mercy be mindful of him in Thy heavenly glory. . . ."

It is long past eight, and nearly dark. The window is open. The summer night of Touraine is still and sweet-scented. Commynes is on his knees by the pillows, his sad eyes staring on his friend and master. Before the last psalm is finished Louis' breathing has ceased. The King is dead. The tapers are lit. It is half past eight o'clock of Saturday, August 31, the weekly feast of his Patroness.

"Our Lord Jesus Christ," writes Commynes in his journal, "removed him from this miserable world in the full exercise of his faculties, understanding, and memory, having received all the Sacraments, suffering no pain, as far as could be perceived, and using his speech to within the space of a Paternoster of his death."

V

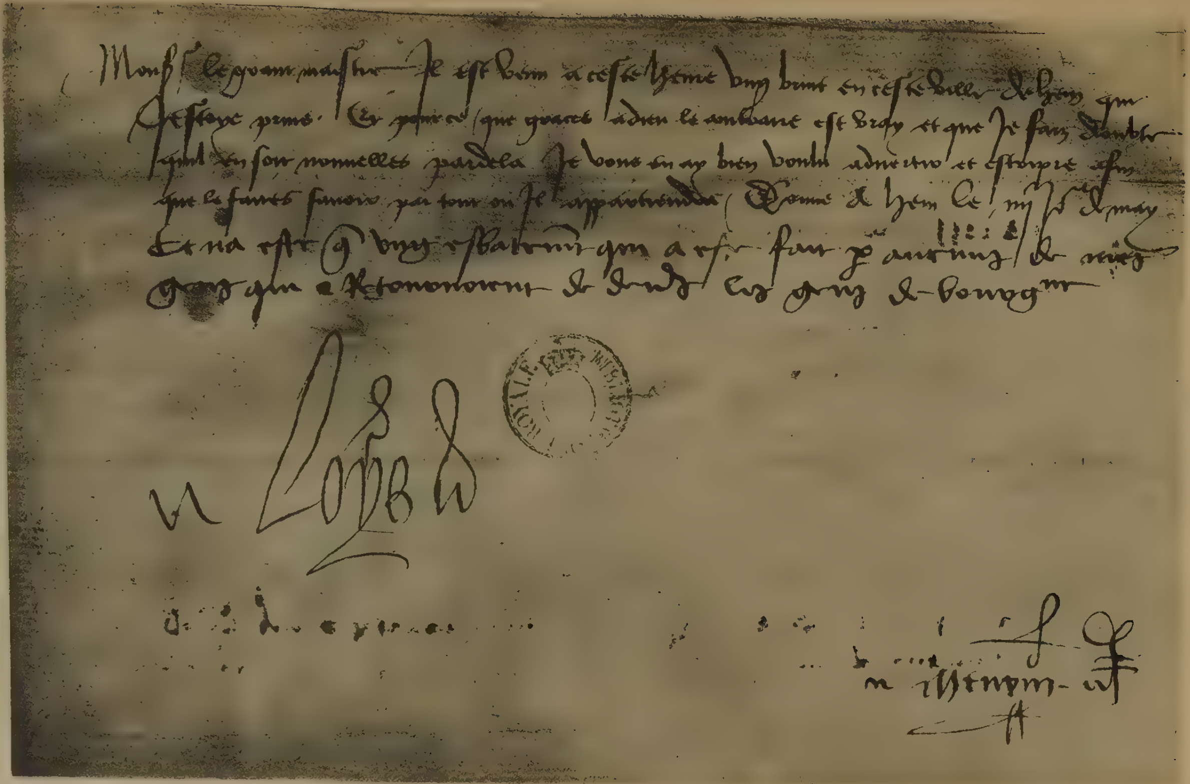
SOME LETTERS OF LOUIS XI

SOME LETTERS OF LOUIS XI

The correspondence of Louis XI, or as much of it as has already been discovered—for it seems possible that there are ſtill certain European archives to be explored—consiſts of more than two thousand letters, the greater number dictated by Louis to his platoon of secretaries, whose signatures appear beneath his. These letters fill eleven octavo volumes in the edition published by MM. Joseph Vaesen and Etienne Charavay for the *Société de l'Hiſtoire de France,* and embrace every phase of Louis' activities. They are written in Latin, French, Italian, Catalan, Flemish, and German; every one of them bears the unmiſtakable ſtamp of the maſter.

The selection which follows has been made with the object of displaying Louis in varying moods. No letter concerned exclusively with policy or diplomatic business has been included, since the intereſt of such letters is academic, their length for the moſt part excessive, and their contents technical. Rather have I selected the briefer, more vivid type of familiar communication from Louis to his servants; for example, the sharp rebuke to the Chancellor (No. 1), the siniſter jollity of No. IV, the threatening curtness of No. V, the Johnsonian exactitude of the order for a hat in No. VI, the avuncular solicitude of No. IX, the sarcasm of No. XIV, the paternal and political anxiety of No. XVI, the half-jocular truculence of No. XVIII. In more than one letter of routine instruction there occurs a sudden flash which reveals the man—for example, in a letter to the Seigneurs du Bouchage and de Soliers in which Louis warns them against the duplicity of a certain Monsieur de Genton ("if you are fools enough to place faith in anything M. de Genton says to you. . . ."), adding as a general precept: "They (the Burgundian envoys) are lying hard to you. *Lie hard yourselves.*" And again, in a letter to the Grand Master of the Household announcing the taking of Arras ("thanks be to God and Our Lady") there is a notable sentence: "With regard to my wound, it is due to the Duke of Burgundy, who called me *the coward king*. But you know my habits, for you have seen me before." Such passages summon up the very features and voice of the King.

The correspondence of Louis XI is in itself a monument of unimpeachable evidence to his character; the clear cool intelligence of the man, his grasp of affairs, his energy, his attention to detail, his vigor of mind, his breadth of conception, his ability to gather, unravel, and hold the tangled threads of intrigue, his subtlety, his concentration, his waiving, where necessary, of scruple, his passionate patriotism, his religion—all are here, set down by his own hand. It is necessary to be aware that the letters following do not display his whole character, and that it is for the most part precisely the letters which have a purely academic interest—the letters of diplomacy and policy—which show the essential greatness of this man.



Note of Louis XI to the Grand Master of France, dictated at Ham, May 4th, 1471, with a Postcript in Louis' hand.

I

To the Chancellor

(*September* 1, 1466)

Chancellor, certain matters have been reported to us in which you have not taken much trouble (*à quoy vous avez petitement ouvré*), although these are matters which we very expressly charged the Sire de Chastillon our cousin to bring to your notice exactly and in detail. Remedy this, and give such attention to it as shall give us satisfaction, and see that you do not fail. Given at Angerville, the first day of September.

LOYS

TOUSTAIN

II

To the Grand Master of the Household

(*May* 4, 1471)

My lord the Grand Master, a rumour has just arrived in this town of Ham that I have been taken prisoner. Since, thanks be to God, the contrary is the truth, and since I do not doubt that the news will spread further, I am very glad to send you this information, that you may publish it wherever needful. Given at Ham, the fourth of May. *It was merely a frolic on the part of some of my people coming back from tackling the Burgundians.*[1]

LOYS

MEURIN

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[1] This sentence is in Louis' own hand.

III

To the Chancellor, the Grand Master of the Household, and the Sire de Craon

(*December* 21, 1473)

My lords the Chancellor, the Grand Master, and De Craon, I send you by Master Loys d'Amboise and Monseigneur de Genly an account of what the Constable's people have said, and my reply. They will tell you their instructions concerning the Constable. It seems to me that Mgr. de Genly has good will; he has promised me to gain over Mgr. de Mouy and the men-at-arms and to recover the town (Saint Quentin) despite the Constable. Treat him well, as you know well how to do, and see if he will do what he says. I have instructed them in writing that if the Constable will give up the town of Mgr. Saint Quentin and take his oath on the True Cross of St. Laud, as they will inform you, I shall be content to pardon him. . . .

I pray you to discover through our protonotary, as soon as you possibly can, the attitude of the Duke of Burgundy. If there is any necessity for me to come as far as Creil, write and tell me, and I will do so at once, either to treat with the Duke or the Constable; and from Creil I will proceed from Guise in one night as far as Compiègne to speak with our protonotary, if need be, and return next day. Would anyone think I had hæmorrhoids? . . .

Show these letters to the governor of the Limousin and to no other, and afterwards throw them in the fire in the presence of the bearer. Written at Montléan, the twenty-first of December.

LOYS

TILHART

IV

To the Grand Master of the Household

(*June* 25, 1477)

My lord the Grand Master, I am sending you three or four thousand mowers to do the damage (*faire le gast*) you know of.[2] I beg you to put them to work, and do not grudge five or six pipes of wine, that they may have plenty to drink themselves intoxicated (*à les faire bien boyre et les enyvrer*). The next day, very early, set them to their job, in such a way that I may hear of it. My lord the Grand Master, my friend, I assure you that this will be the one way in the world to make those in Valenciennes speak up most quickly: and so adieu. Written at Mgr. St. Quentin, the twenty-fifth of June.

LOYS
DE CHAUMONT

V

To the Dean and Chapter of Angers Cathedral

(*May* 13, 1479)

Dear and well-beloved, we have already written to you two or three times desiring you to elect Master Auger de Brye, our counsellor, in which matter you have done nothing. Elect him, therefore, on receipt of this letter, for we will on no account suffer any other to have this bishopric but our said counsellor: and if I find any one opposing this, I will have him expelled from the Kingdom of France. See to this without fail. Written at Brienon, the 13th of May.

LOYS
DOYAT

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[2] I.e., to burn and lay waste the fields and crops round Valenciennes.

VI

To François de Genas, General of Finances of Languedoc

(*April* 8, 1480)

Monsieur le Général, I have forgotten to ask you to finance me (*que vous me fissiez finance*) with a hat similar to the one which the Bishop of Valence, Messire Loys de Poictiers, gave me, which he said he had brought from Rome. I think it was of some felt other than beaver, a good inch thick, covering the shoulders and back completely, and coming well over the horse's crupper; it was also well turned up in front and at the sides, so that one had no need of a cloak against the rain, and in hot weather it was as good as a little house.

I beg you, for the sake of all the pleasure you would afford me, to try to find me one of these and send it to me very soon, that I may have it before the heat sets in. Monsieur le Général, I pray God to have you in His holy keeping. Written at Plessis-du-Parc, the eighth of April.

LOYS
LE MARESCHAL

VII

To the Same

(*May* 24, 1480)

Monsieur le Général, I have had your letters and the hats you sent me, but they are not the kind I want. Until I get those which should be coming from Rome, you may send me some from Valence. Let them be made as light as can possibly be.

As to the barber you have sent me, you remember I told you to send me a man from Montpelier. If you can find me one of the sort I want, send him to me at once. Written at Bouligny, the twentyfourth of May.

LOYS
LEBOURCIER

VIII

To the Citizens of Lyons

(*September* 28, 1470)

By the King.

Dear and well-beloved, for the reason that, among other things affecting the well-being and utility of the state (*la chouse publicque*) of our Realm, the existence of trade is one of the cardinal supports of our people, on which account we desire with all our heart to ensure good order and provision for its sustenance, security, and furtherance, and to obviate the losses and damage which have lately fallen, and might again fall, on our subjects without such good order;

We have, after long and mature deliberation and counsel, ordered an assembly in our Town of Tours of a certain number of good and notable merchants and other experienced persons of other good towns of our said Realm, for the purpose of discussing methods to adopt regarding these aforesaid matters, so that in future the conduct of trade may be more securely exercised in safe places within our obedience, and that our said subjects, with the help of God, may thereby profit the more and live in safety under our rule.

We therefore will and command you to elect and choose from the merchants of our Town of Lyons two of the sagest and most experienced in such matters, and to despatch them to us in our Town of Tours before the twentieth day of October next, there to advise us in loyalty and good faith concerning the exercise and conduct of the said trading.

And further, since some quantity of goods and merchandise taken, sent, and purchased in the country of our dear brother of Burgundy by our subjects (thinking to find there the security they deserved) has without reasonable cause been seized by or on behalf of our said dear brother, we, desiring to prevent such damage and inconvenience to our said subjects, make known to you that until we have made a decision in this matter, and until further notice, we will that no merchants of our Realm take any part in trade, at fairs or otherwise, within the country of Flanders or any other under the rule of our said dear brother of Burgundy.

And we command you to signify the same publicly and by the sound of the trumpet in our said Town, making known that all who are found to disobey shall be strictly punished as transgressors of our commands and ordinances. Given at Amboise, the twenty-eighth of September.

LOYS

DESMOULINS

IX

To Madame de la Bellière

(*July* 28, 1477)

Madame, I commend myself to you with all my heart, and pray you, if you please, to take my two nieces[3] into your charge. I am no doctor, but it seems to me that one should not forbid their drinking at irregular times if they are thirsty; but let a great deal of water be mixed with their wine, and let them have nothing but the small wines (*petiz vins*) of Touraine. Give them no salted meats or spiced dishes, but boiled and all moist meats, and give them no fruit except grapes, which should be thoroughly ripe. It occurs to me that I have been told apples are good; but some are most harmful and bring on dysentery . . .

I can think of nothing else to write to you, Madame, except that you are to be sure that you may depend on me as long as I am alive. If you have need of anything you have only to ask, for I hold myself obliged to perform it, and so adieu, Madame. Written at Arras, the twentyeighth of July.

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[3] Marguerite and Gillette, daughters of Olivier de Coétivy, Seigneur de Taillebourg, and Louis' natural sister, Marie de Valois.

X

To the Townspeople of Harfleur

(*April* 13, 1475)

By the King.

Dear and well-beloved, in order to resist and repel the descent and damnable enterprise which the English and our ancient adversaries, rebels, and disobedient subjects have boasted and boast of undertaking against us, our kingdom, lands, and lordships, and our good and loyal vassals and subjects, and in order to harass and damage them as much as lies in our power, with the help of God our Creator, we have decided, the moment these truces expire, to send a strong force to sea. For this purpose we have armed and equipped with artillery all the tall ships of our land of Normandy and design to victual them for four months, including the ship called the *Magdalene* of Harfleur. . . .

We have ordered that you shall supply money to the total of 600 livres Tournois for the victualling of the aforesaid ship. We therefore pray and indeed command you briefly, by the obedience you owe us, to furnish and supply, without delay and immediately, the said sum of 600 livres Tournois to Raoulin Le Normant, by us appointed to take charge of the accounts of the victualling of the said ships, and that without any refusal, argument, or hesitation. . . . Given at Vernon-sur-Seine, the thirteenth of April.

LOYS

LEGOUZ

XI

To Jehan Bourré

(*June* 4, 1472)

Monseigneur du Plessis, you were, as I ordered from Tours, to have sent the clerk from the War Treasury immediately with the money I ordered for the men-at-arms of my brother the Constable. Nevertheless he has written to me saying that there is no sign of the said clerk or the money. I am not pleased with the way this has been handled: therefore send at once after this man and hurry him, and let me have no excuses from you, saying that you told the Treasurer, because if there is any failure I shall want an explanation from you, since by your fault and his you may involve me in irreparable damage. . . . Written at Notre-Dame de Celle, the fourth of June.

LOYS

TILHART

XII

To the Parlement

(*June* 6, 1478)

Well-beloved and trusty lieges, Prince Thirty-Pieces-of-Silver[4] has endeavoured to poison us, but God, Our Lady, and Monseigneur Saint Martin have preserved and guarded us, as you will see by the copy of the information we send you, to be read in open assembly in the presence of the public, that all may know the great treachery and wickedness of the said prince. Given at Cambrai, the sixth of June.

XIII

To the Seigneur de Bressuire

(*November* 4, 1481)

Monsieur de Bressuire, I have received word from Normandy and elsewhere that the English army is out of action (*est rompue*) for this year. Since I perceive that you have nothing to do in your present quarters, I am going back to take and kill some boars, in order not to lose the season, till the season arrives to take and kill some English. Let me have continual news of you and anything that happens, and on no account move from your position; and if you have need, send to me and I will come to you; but keep me informed. God be with you. Written at Argenton, the fourth of November.

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[4] I.e., Judas:—The Prince of Orange, who after deserting Louis for Burgundy had instigated a plot to remove him by spreading poison on the pavement and the altar-cloth which Louis was accustomed devoutly to kiss at the end of his daily Mass.

LOYS
DOYAT

XIV

To the Sire de Craon and the Comte de Brienne

(*February* 9, 1477)

My lords, I have had your letters, and thank you for the honour you propose to do me in holding me to ransom between you. I am quite willing that you should have one half of the remaining money you have discovered, but I beg you to put the rest together and use it in repairing the places on the German frontier, attending to what may be necessary, in such a manner that I lose nothing. If you have no use for it, I beg you to send it to me.

Touching the Duke of Burgundy's wines, which are in his cellars, I am content that you should have them. Written at Péronne, the ninth of February.

LOYS
J. MESME

XV

To Madame de Montsoreau

(*August* 12, 1482)

Madame, I am sending you my groom of the stables, Jehan de Chasteaudreux, to bring me back all the dogs you have received from the late Queen of England.[5] As you know, she made me her heir, and this will be all the good I shall get out of it: it is also the kind of bequeſt I like beſt. I pray you, keep none of them back, or I should be terribly displeased (*vous me feriez terriblement grant desplaisir*); but if you know of any one else who has any, tell the said Chaſteaudreux. And God keep you, Madame. Written at Meung-sur-Loire, the twelfth of Auguſt.

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[5] Margaret of Anjou, wife of Henry VI and daughter of René, King of Anjou and Sicily.

LOYS

BERBISEY

XVI

To the Comte de Saint-Pol,[6] *the Seigneur du Plessis, and Maſter Claude de Molins*[7]

(*November* 13, 1480)

Monsieur le Comte, Monsieur du Plessis, and you, Maſter Claude, do not take my Lord the Dauphin any more into the fields until February, and let me know tomorrow morning how he was tonight, after having been out in the fields. And God keep you. Written at Plessis-du-Parc, the thirteenth of November.

LOYS

BOHIER

XVII

To the Seigneur du Bouchage

(*May* 2, 1474)

. . .[8] de Saint George, formerly an archer in the company of the Seigneur de Saint-Juſt, has served me in my wars for a considerable time, exposing himself to danger and thereby losing a leg. I am of opinion that he can ſtill continue to be of service in the guard of the Great Tower of Bourges, as an arbaleſtier. I beg you therefore, if he addresses himself to you, to be good enough to find him a place as archer in the said Tower, and to pay him wages and subsidies like the other troops established to guard the said Tower; and see that there is no failure. Given at Senlis, the second of May.

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[6] Guyot Pot, who had been given the lands and title of Saint-Pol after the fall of Louis de Luxembourg.

[7] Physician to Louis and the ten-year-old Dauphin, who had been very ill in the spring of 1480.

[8] The beginning of this letter has been loſt.

LOYS
AURILLOT

XVIII (*Extract*)

To the Same

(*December* 17, 1480)

. . . the lying prieſt (*sic*) of Monsieur de Chimay has been, and wants you to find a lodging for him, and he will come. He is the moſt swollen traitorous blackguard (*le plus orgueilleus trayſtre paillart*) I have ever set eyes on. I threw him out. (*Je l'ay chasé.*)

XIX

To the Parlement, and to the Chambre des Comptes of Burgundy

(*September* 21, 1482)

By the King.

Dear and truſty lieges, for the very great good-will we bear to the Crown and Realm of France and its subjects and inhabitants, on our return from our journey to Monsieur St. Claude, where we went in great devotion, and afterwards to Our Lady of Cléry, in whom we have at all times had very earneſt confidence, then passing by our town and caſtle of Amboise, we desired to see our very dear and beloved son the Dauphin, who will succeed after us, when it is God our Creator's good pleasure, to the said Crown. To him we showed forth and spoke many great and good things for his inſtruction and edification and the government of the said Realm, enjoining on him also to maintain the lords, captains, and officers we have placed and ordained in it in the same ſtate as he will find them after us, without altering or changing anything, that all may work the more towards the good, honour, profit, utility, and advantage of the said Crown and Realm and the subjects thereof, as you will more plainly see from the letters-patent drawn up and ordered by us on this subject.

And since our pleasure is that these letters take effect, we command and expressly enjoin on you to have these our letters read, published, and regiſtered in our Court and Chamber of Accounts, and their contents observed and followed with no infringement at any time, now or in the future: and to this end, you are to see to it that there is no failure. Given at Amboise, the twenty-firſt of September.

LOYS

PARENT

XX

To Jehan Bourré

(*May* 12, 1471)

Monseigneur du Plessis, Mathieu Frammery, my falconer, tells me that three months' wages of laſt year are ſtill owing to him, as well as this year's, which he has not yet received. I am not pleased with this. As I am sending my said falconer to Amboise to see to the mewing of my birds, I pray you to have him completely paid up. . . .

LOYS

TILHART

XXI

To the Chancellor and Members of the Great Council, at Tours

(*August* 16, 1470)

Dear and trusty lieges, as once before, we have now had communicated to you a Bull and Apostolic Letter from our Holy Father Pope Paul,[9] containing a project of a new and religious fraternity, or confraternity, for universal peace. These letters our most dear and beloved uncle the King of Sicily sent you by his confessor, in whose behalf the Seigneur de Nogent spoke before us.

Since this matter is new and of great good and import, as it seems to us, and since we would desire with all our heart to study it and understand its full purport, we command and enjoin you very expressly to read the said Bull and Apostolic Letter and to discuss in full assembly of our Great Council each article separately, one after the other, in order to perceive the nature of the said confraternity. For although, as we understand, its matter and essence have been decided in Consistory and approved by our said Holy Father, after mature deliberation, nevertheless before proceeding further and before publishing or causing it to be published in our Realm we would wish to have the said contents thoroughly discussed by you: and should there be any matter in it in any way prejudicial to us, or in any way requiring modification or interpretation, you are to state in writing what needs to be done, and we will have it altered, if need be, with all diligence. For this matter of its own nature appeals to us, and we are resolved, having received your advice and opinion on it, to put it into execution and to publish it forth in the most solemn manner possible. Given at Angers, the sixteenth of August.

LOYS
BOURRÉ

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[9] Paul II.

XXII

To Pierre Aymer, Guillaume de Sailly, and Louis Le Blanc

(*August* 13, 1482)

Trusty and well-beloved, we send you letters of commission empowering you to make an inventory of all documents in our Trésor des Chartes at Paris, commanding and expressly enjoining you to set aside all other charges or occupations and to attend with all diligence to the making of the said Inventory. When this is perfect you will draw it up in the due form. You will devote yourselves to this work without interruption, as ordered in our letters of commission addressed to you; and you will make a report of the whole, of which we desire a copy, the original remaining in the said Treasury. See to it that you fail not. Given at Saint Laurent-des-Eaux, the thirteenth of August.

LOYS

COURTIN

XXIII

To Auger de Brye, Bishop of Angers

(*May* 5, 1481)

By the King.

Dear and well-beloved, there has recently been sent to us by our Holy Father the Pope a Bull and a Brief, of which we send you an approved copy and *vidimus* in authentic form, for peace and union among all Christian Princes, in order that they may unite for the defence of our holy Catholic Faith; in which Bull all patriarchs, primates, archbishops, bishops, and other prelates are ordered to publish the contents, as you will plainly see.

And since for our part we have always, out of honour and reverence towards God our Creator, and to avoid the effusion of human and Christian blood, desired peace, and do desire it strongly, as also to give pleasure to our said Holy Father and to comply with his wish, and especially for the good of the Christian Religion, the defence of our said holy Faith, and the defeat of its enemies, to which end we are determined to devote all possible aid and succour, and to employ therein ourself, our warriors, and our whole power,

We have resolved to maintain, preserve, and keep, for our part, the three years' truce made and commanded by our said Holy Father and the Holy Apostolic See, provided that all our enemies, adversaries, and rebel and disobedient subjects will do the same on their part. . . .

Given at Plessis-du-Parc, the fifth of May.

LOYS

DE CERISAY

XXIV

To the Seigneur de Taillebourg

(*January* 1, 1479)

Brother, I have sent you word what the Prior of Monseigneur St. Eutrope de Xaintes tells me is necessary to keep the church from collapsing and to renovate what is decayed, in a bad state, and likely to give way. But I know not whether his statement is accurate and if he wants to deceive me, or whether he is deceived himself, for he has divided the work between master-masons of that place; and as you may know, workmen arrange things to their own advantage to make the most out of it they can, especially when they have to do with people who (they think) have a well-lined purse, like myself. One must not trust them. I beg you therefore, for the sake of all the pleasure you would ever give me, to send a man of your own who knows his way about (*qui se y congnoisse*). Given at Thouars, the first of January.

LOYS

CHOISY

XXV

To François de Genas, General of Finances

(*January* 11, 1481)

Monsieur le Général, I have received your letters; and with regard to the fifteen thousand florins owing to the Swiss, see to it, one way or another, that you send immediately to Lyons to pay them over. Send a trusty man there who can conduct this matter properly, but do not go yourself, for you must attend to some other things before leaving. But in any case look to this so thoroughly that there is no mistake about the money being delivered to them, or I assure you I will bring it home to you personally. Given at Poitiers.

LOYS

PETIT

XXVI

To the Townspeople of Poitiers

(*April* 4, 1465)

Dear and well-beloved, we have been lately warned that our brother of Berry and the Dukes of Brittany and Bourbon, and their adherents, in order to conduct the evil and damnable enterprises and machinations which they have undertaken and still undertake to our prejudice and that of our Realm, are conveying letters and instructions one to another by means of persons sick of leprosy and others in their company.

We therefore warn you to stop and examine travellers at the gates of our town of Poitiers and all gates and passages in the district, and if any of the said lepers or others arrive, to have them searched and interrogated on the above matter; and if you learn anything therefrom, to inform us with all diligence. Keep a good watch and be diligent in all these things, that no inconvenience may result, for we place confidence in you. Given at Saumur, the fourth of April.

XXVII

To the Grand Master of the Household

(*December* 12, 1471)

My Lord the Grand Master, as you know I promised you the sum of four thousand crowns by the feast of Epiphany. In order that you may know that I have not forgotten you and that I am a good payer (*je suis bon paieur*) I have decided not to wait till the end of the appointed time. I therefore send you herewith the sum of four thousand livres Tournois, and thus owe you now no more than fifteen thousand francs, which I will send you as soon as I can. Send me a receipt for this sum, and send me also any news you have. Given at Montbazon, the twelfth of December.

LOYS
BOURRÉ

XXVIII

To the Seigneur de La Heuse

(*October* 15, 1482)

Monsieur de La Heuse, I pray you, for the sake of all the service and pleasure you would ever wish to accord me, to make such representation to our Holy Father the Pope that His Holiness will deign to free, absolve, and dispense me from a vow I have made to travel in person to Monseigneur St. James.[10] Let him do so verbally, and then take letters from our said Holy Father and bring them to me, and let there be no mistake. And do not forget to do what I wrote to you and to Loppe touching the holy man (St. Francesco de Paula); and God keep you.

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[10] The ancient and still famous shrine of St. James at Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, Spain.

XXIX

To the Grand Master of the Household

(*June* 10, 1472)

My Lord the Grand Master, I send you the letters which my lord the Constable has written me: it is necessary for you to hasten to him. I beg you to do this with the greatest possible diligence, for time is valuable, as you may see by the said letters. Given at Montreuil-Bellay, the tenth day of June.

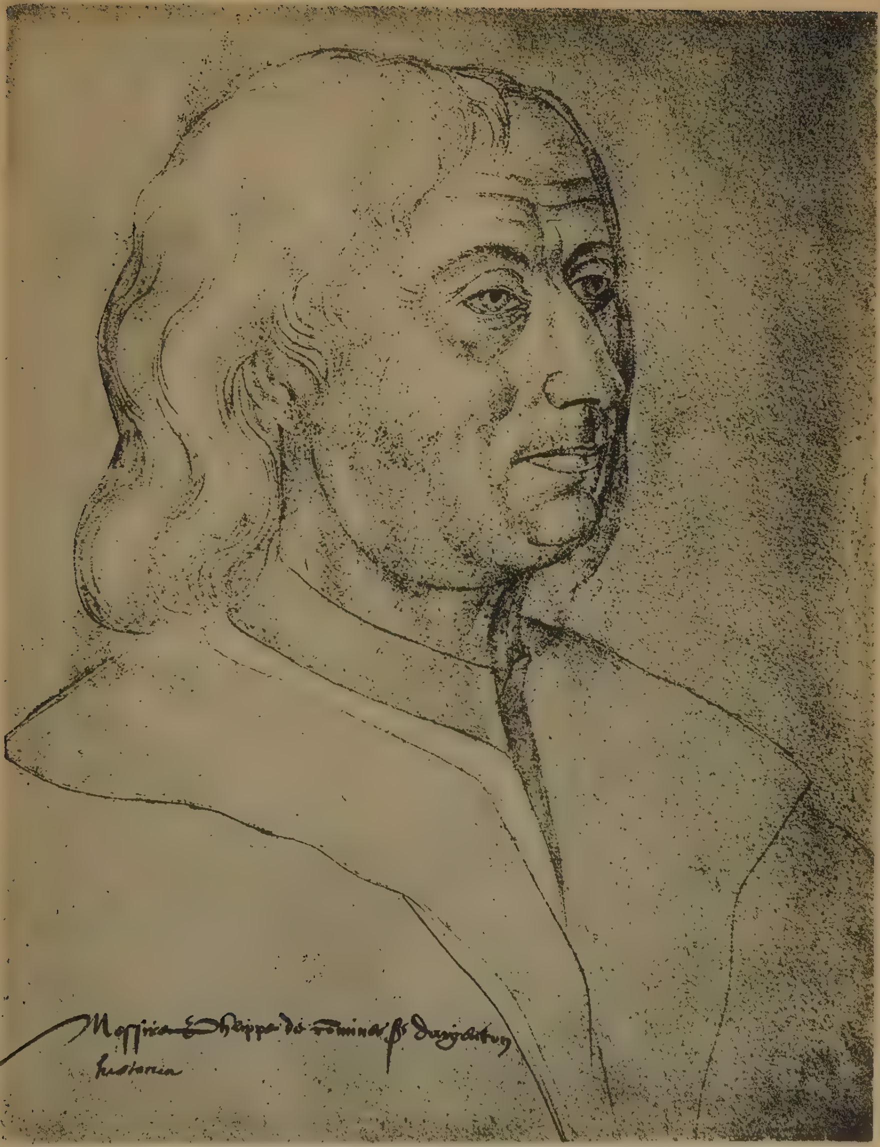
LOYS

TILHART

VI

THREE FAMILIARS

1. Messire Philippe de Commynes
2. Master Olivier le Daim, Barber-Surgeon
3. Dr. Jacques Coictier


Messire Phelippe de Comines sr dargenton
historien

Philippe de Commynes
A Portrait from the Arras Collection

I

MESSIRE PHILIPPE DE COMMYNES

§ 1

A SINGULAR charm is exhaled alike by the prose and the personality of Philippe de Commynes; a charm to which many have paid tribute. Montaigne, who loved his Memoirs and shared his qualities, wrote of him: "One finds in him a sweet, agreeable style, of a plain simplicity: his narration is pure, and the obvious good faith of the author illuminates it." Sainte-Beuve, whose status as a critic none may question, says: "He is the first really modern writer. Both Montaigne and Commynes . . . are wise, judicious, equipped with a fine, sure intelligence, enriched by an experience which is not so much bitter as profitable and consoling; counselors and conversationalists as good to hear after three or four centuries as in their own day. What in them appears naïve is simply grace, a flower of language adorning their maturity. One willingly imagines wisdom white-haired and prudence gray; here rather they are shown smiling, with a manner of speech which is youthful and full of freshness." And again: "Commynes, in his Memoirs, is not merely a chronicler, he is a political philosopher."

Commynes' pages are stamped with three characteristics: lucidity, perspicacity (not unmixed, as is only proper, with irony) and grace. Here and there they quicken into vividness, as in the account of the trap into which Louis XI fell at Péronne. Commynes paints the scene like a master. There is the raving Burgundy, striding up and down, throwing himself on and off his bed all night, menacing the King, trembling with fury. There is Louis, the trapped fox, in actual danger of his life at Burgundy's hands, and, for all his courage, sorely afraid. And there is Commynes himself, already disillusioned of Burgundy and tiring of the violence of his master, already struck with admiration for Louis' superior intelligence, walking up and down the room with Burgundy, appealing to reason, persuading, soothing. Sainte-Beuve instances another vivid scene in Commynes, a perfect pendant to the drama of Péronne, a scene of pure comedy. It takes place in 1475, seven years after Péronne. The Constable of Saint-Pol, immersed in treachery for self-aggrandizement, is playing off between themselves the Kings of France and England and the Duke of Burgundy: a perilous game which leads to his death on the scaffold. It is just before the treaty of Picquigny with the English. The Constable, who is being watched by Louis' spies, sends envoys to Louis to clear himself of the suspicion of being about to give up places to the English. The envoys are Louis de Sainville and Jehan Richer; and Louis, who happens to have with him at the time an aged faithful servitor of Burgundy, a certain Seigneur de Contay, devises a scheme to amaze the old man: for Louis has a hard, dry sense of humor.

He plants de Contay with Commynes behind a screen in the chamber where he is about to receive Saint-Pol's envoys, seats himself on a stool near the screen, and orders the envoys to be admitted. Louis de Sainville, who thinks he is alone with the King, announces that Burgundy is mightily incensed against the English; and forthwith de Sainville begins to imitate the fury of Burgundy, stamping on the floor, gesticulating with bulging eyes, swearing great oaths by St. George, waving his arms, calling the King of England "Blaybourgne" (after an archer of that name), pacing to and fro, giving a lifelike performance generally. Louis, on his stool by the screen, roars with laughter, orders him to speak up, pretends he is slightly deaf, makes him repeat the best scenes; which de Sainville, nothing loth in the presence of such a good audience, immediately does. When the comedy is over Louis dismisses Saint-Pol's envoys and contemplates with vast amusement the expression of the old Seigneur de Contay on emerging from behind his screen. De Contay has henceforth only one desire, to get into the saddle as soon as possible and bear to his master Burgundy news of the Constable's faithlessness. This scene Commynes depicts admirably, savoring to the full the comedy value of a screen, as Molière and Sheridan will do after him.

Deeper, and no less valuable and instructive, are the chapters or interludes in which Commynes, as it were, rests on his oars for a space, lets his narrative drift, and devotes himself to meditation on the scenes he has witnessed, on the principles of government, on the political complexion of events and the causes of things. His conclusions are stamped with the sound, balanced, Latin common sense of philosophers of his race. For example, concerning war. Commynes sees clearly that war is the scourge of his age, and he invests it with no glamor or trappings of glory. On the other hand he does not fall into the follies of modern sentimentalists who think they can abolish it. The most clear and luminous intellects of the ages have discussed the ethics of making war and have come to conclusions which logic and good sense demand. Thus St. Augustine says that since there are natural rights, there are also just wars. St. Thomas Aquinas, whose thinking is today being once more awarded its rightful supremacy by some of the leading minds in Europe, ranges war among the sins opposed to charity, but agrees that war actuated by a just cause, declared by a sovereign, and conducted according to the principles of justice, with a right intention, is allowable. The Spanish theologians Vittoria and Suarez add to this that every other means of obtaining redress for wrong should be exhausted before a just war can be undertaken, and that the sovereign has no right to declare war without taking counsel and opinion of his people. Commynes is of the same mind. Kings and princes (he says) who undertake nothing warlike without the approval of their subjects are thereby rendered stronger and more feared by their enemies. And further, no sovereign has a right to lay any tax, whether for war or otherwise, on his subjects without their consent. The "modernity" of Commynes' ideas is here easily perceived. The very delay, he adds, incurred in undertaking war by first obtaining this consent is beneficial.

There is a "modern" ring in Commynes' reflections on government generally. He declares that no king has the right to say "I have the privilege of taking from my subjects what I please." He is, like Montesquieu, for government on the English model. In England, he remarks, war-preparations are long and slow, "for the king cannot undertake anything of the kind without assembling the parliament, which is a very just and noble thing—*qui est chose très juste et saincte.*" He has observed that of all the *seigneuries* in the world he knows, the one in which the least violence falls on the common people is England: a just observation, since even in the bloody Wars of the Roses which were tearing England asunder at this very time the attendant evils fell much more on the nobility than any other class. Commynes attributes this benefit directly to the part played in English government by the Commons. It follows from this that he recommends a greater and more regular participation in French government of the *Etats*, the parliaments. His reflections today, when parliamentarism has become such a rottenness and a byword that in some parts of civilized Europe it has been elbowed aside for dictatorships, would be interesting reading.

His irony, which again gives his writing that freshness and modern air, is admirably seen in his manner of treating such a battle as the affair of Montlhéry. Soldiers are no more heroes to him than they are to Mr. Bernard Shaw. He neither dresses them in heraldic trappings nor relates stories of gallant chivalry in hand-to-hand combat, in the manner of Froissart. His manner is that of an ironist of today contemplating the scuffling and blundering of some of the more famous muddles of the late Great War. One of his judgments in the Montlhéry affair (in which he himself took part) is at once Shavian and true: the best fighters, he says, referring to the archers who were then what infantry is today, are those who have seen nothing of the enemy's steel, since they do not realize their perils. He contemplates both sides. He sees one plan of action agreed on in council and its precise opposite ordered in the field. He sees the Burgundian cavalry, too impatient to preserve formation, riding over their own front line of archers, who therefore cannot loose an arrow. And his cool, amused, malicious eye picks out for especial notice two personages, one on either side, who struck spurs into their horses and galloped away into safety, one as far as Poitou, the other as far as Hainaut. "These two," he notes, "had no consuming desire to bite each other." There is the same dash of agreeable acid in his vivid description of the night-attack by the Liégois on the lodgings of Louis XI and Burgundy, when Louis, having just given in to his furious rival at Péronne to save his own life, was engaged with him in subduing the town of Liége. The townsmen fell upon the houses where their enemies were lodged so late and so suddenly that Commynes had scarcely time to clap an iron cap (*sallade*) on Burgundy's head and bundle with him down the stairs. Louis meanwhile, in his own lodgings, was protected by his faithful Scots bodyguard, who, says Commynes, showed themselves *bien bonnes gens,* for they did not budge a foot from their master, and meanwhile, in the darkness and confusion, continued steadily firing long, strong arrows into the night, whereby (says Commynes) they wounded more Burgundians than Liégois.

His Memoirs remain, in the words of Sainte-Beuve, who is well qualified to judge, "the definitive history of his time, a monument of simplicity, truth, and subtlety," from which all French political history dates. His picture of Louis XI is no whitewashing of a master he loved and admired. He includes the defects. He dives deep into causes and distinguishes. His inclinations never sway his judgments. He sees clearly behind the scenes, and is not deceived. He is that rare bird, the unprejudiced historian, and the painter of events not in the flat but in the round.

§ 2

Philippe de Commynes, Seigneur d'Argenton, was born in 1447 in the château of Commynes, on what is now the Franco-Belgian frontier, on the River Lys. His father was High Bailiff of Flanders, and his father's overlord, Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, stood godfather to the child. The High Bailiff, an administrator of small talent, departed this life shortly afterwards, leaving his affairs, public and private, heavily involved, and the young Philippe, having been educated by a cousin with the common education of the noble young at that period—more horsemanship than Humanities—passed into Burgundy's service as a squire, and at the age of twenty became chamberlain to Burgundy's son Charolais, afterwards Charles the Rash.

In Charolais' household life was none too easy. The young lord's temperament was impulsive. There is a story of his striking Commynes in the face with a spurred boot. He paid Commynes a salary of eighteen sous a day, in the manner of the rich. There was much tedium in his service and little excitement; and it is possible that the engagement of Montlhéry in July, 1465, was a relief to Commynes, who took part in the fight with Charolais against the Royal troops and has left a minute account of it, the blundering, the midsummer heat and dust, the dubious result. In this fight he sees Louis XI in the thick of the mess, cheering on his men, leading them, charging at their head, riding the whirlwind and directing the storm with notable courage. Already he admires this man. Three years later he sees Louis again at closer quarters, drawn into the trap at Péronne. This time Louis is in a different sort of danger, and realizes it, and feels fear, as brave men may. Commynes is present, and warns him in secret not to oppose the will of Burgundy at this moment, or all is lost. Louis takes the advice of this man, whom he instinctively knows to be a friend, and is pliant; Commynes reasons with Burgundy, raging all night; the danger is averted. Louis will never forget.

It was towards the end of July or August, 1471, that the incident occurred which was to change Commynes' whole life. He was sent by Burgundy on a secret mission to Louis XI. There is no record of the interview, but it is evident that its effect on Commynes was as tremendous as that of the first talk which Boswell had with Johnson. Louis, on his side, had already coolly surveyed his man, judged his value, and determined to have him. As Commynes observed later, among all the princes he had ever known Louis was the one who would work hardest to gain over a man who could either be of service to him, or who might do him damage. "Neither did he take offence at a first refusal from the man he was endeavoring to influence, but would continue, making large promises and, indeed, giving him money and places which he knew would please."

No doubt it was not merely Louis' conversation, nor his promises, which completed the fascination of Commynes. He was already sufficient of a judge of men and Kings to distinguish great and royal qualities in the man before him. . . . And so the interview was concluded, and Commynes returned to Burgundy. Very shortly afterwards there was placed to his account, with a merchant banker of Tours named Jehan de Beaune, the sum of 6000 livres Tournois. Where this money came from is no mystery. It was a gift from Louis to Commynes. More bluntly, it was a bribe, or more accurately, first-fruits. And Commynes has been severely handled by the moralists on this account, for this ineffaceable blot on his honor. But what of his times? And (if one may say so) is it only in the later Middle Ages that gentlemen have taken bribes? What of the eighteenth-century men of honor who so daintily slipped Lord North's money under their ruffles? And —leaving aside the topic of gentlemen—what of the ordinary modern politician? A sense of proportion and an elementary knowledge of history and human nature seem to desert the moralist when he mounts his hobby, as inevitably as a sense of humor.

Commynes, then, took his bribe, and banked it, and went back to duty. There was now a tacit and partially sealed bargain between him and Louis. Commynes seems to have hesitated to conclude the affair. Louis, who had no sentiment in business matters, waited for some time; and then, seeing that action was required, sent Master Pierre Clutin, of the Parliament, to Jehan de Beaune with orders to seize, in the King's name, the 6,000 livres deposited with him. This method had its effect. In the night of August 7-8, 1472, Commynes left Burgundy's house and rode over to Louis XI at Pont-de-Cé. Henceforth his future is fixed.

The exact date of the abandonment of the old allegiance for the new is fixed by an interesting letter in the archives of the great family of Croy. It is dated August 8, 1472, at *six o'clock in the morning,* signed by Charles the Rash, and transfers to the Seigneur de Quiévrain all rights and property formerly belonging to Messire de Commynes, by virtue of a sentence of the court of Mons—"rights," says the letter, "which have lapsed to us by right of confiscation, for the reason that he (Commynes) has today, on this date, removed himself from our obedience and taken flight to the party which is opposed to us" —*au moyen de ce qu'il s'est aujourd 'huy, date de cestes, distraict hors de nostre obeyssance et rendu fugitif au party à nous contraire.* The document is eloquent of rage, of stampings to and fro, of oaths, of the relentless routing from sleep of unhappy magistrates in the small hours. It would be pleasant to know the precise manner of Commynes' exit. Did he, for example, leave a farewell note on the dressing-table, in the classic manner of absconding wives? The Muse of History is always dumb concerning these trifling, engaging adjuncts to the human comedy. *De minimis non curat Clio.*

So Commynes is now and henceforth Louis' man. It would be an insult, it would be dragging him to the level of the vulgarest modern politician, to assume that he sold himself for these 6,000 livres, or even for the other rewards which Louis heaped upon him afterwards. He had perceived young Burgundy and judged him accurately: the hot-headed fool went on from folly to folly and before long ended in disaster, as Commynes without doubt foresaw. He had seen, grasped, and swiftly mastered the superior qualities of the King, a man whom any youth of ambition would be glad to serve. (Commynes was only twenty-five at this moment.) Further, Commynes was poor, with nothing but his brains behind him. I do not think a man of his character, however glad of the money and the places which were the concrete reward of his desertion, would put these things first; nor is there any evidence that any treachery on his part with regard to Burgundy was involved. Voltaire, whose mind was naturally attuned to baseness of every kind, alleges that Commynes had for some time been selling Burgundy's secrets to Louis. There is not a particle of evidence anywhere to support this characteristic charge.

From this moment Commynes' fortunes steadily soar upwards. Louis at once fulfilled the remainder of the bargain which we may assume to have been agreed in the fateful interview. Commynes received a pension of 6,000 livres, the title of chamberlain and counselor to the King, the rich principality of Talmont, and a rich heiress to marry—Hélène de Chambes, daughter of the Seigneur de Montsoreau, who brought him 27,000 livres Tournois and the lands, town, and lordship of Argenton. To these were added the Seneschalship of Poitou in 1476 and the captaincy of Poitiers in the next year. But there were to be dark shadows as well as sunshine in this good fortune. The lands of Talmont had been confiscated by Louis XI from their owner Louis d'Amboise and the La Trémoïlle family in circumstances of clear chicanery, too involved to enter into here. Louis and Commynes between them held to these lands in the face of justice and equity, and the result was a law action which is the *cause célèbre* of the age, a long-drawn, stubborn, dreary process, again too involved for discussion in this place. It is enough to say that the conduct of Louis and Commynes alike with regard to the La Trémoïlles is frankly discreditable. But it is satisfactory to note, in a world so full of flagrant injustice, that in the end Commynes will be forced to disgorge, reluctantly, and after employing every legal trick and subtlety to evade plain justice. This is three years after Louis' death, when the La Trémoïlle family, having doggedly waited so long and having, by a skillful move equal to any made by their adversaries, got themselves absolved by ecclesiastical authority from an oath of acquiescence they had been made to swear by force, will finally win their case.

To return.

The new favorite, thus loaded with honors, was not slow to awake enmity among Louis' older servitors, and a Court party, headed by Tristan l'Hermite (that honest capable soldier and faithful servant of Charles VII and Louis alike, whom Hugo and the other Romantics have turned into a bogey of melodrama) showed dislike of Commynes. Moreover, Commynes' first important diplomatic mission ended in failure. Louis had despatched him, after Burgundy's death, to Arras, to prevail by argument and diplomacy on the inhabitants to enter into Louis' allegiance. The men of Arras bluntly dismissed Commynes and his diplomacy and refused to acknowledge any other sovereign but the young Duchess of Burgundy. Commynes' failure was all the more humiliating because other envoys of Louis had succeeded at Péronne, at Ghent, and at St. Omer. On returning to the King Commynes advised securing these places to the Crown by treaty, marriage, or sound title rather than by force. Louis pursed his lips and despatched the discomfited ambassador on a minor mission into Poitou. This amounted to disgrace; but Louis, who knew men and their failings, did not emphasize it, and Commynes received his due share of the property confiscated from the traitor Armagnac. This affair of Arras is Commynes' first check in the service of the House of France, and not his last. Nevertheless one must be on one's guard, and the earlier the better, against assuming that Commynes was a failure in his profession. To wring from the masters of the craft, the Italians, such a compliment as that of the Venetians in 1494: "We know my Lord of Argenton to be a person of the greatest skill and sagacity it is possible to express," gives a diplomat of that age (or any) the highest *cachet* possible, and argues considerable qualities. When Commynes failed it was not for lack of brains or application but because he was in a situation where probably no diplomacy of any sort would have succeeded.

In 1477 Louis gave Commynes another mission, this time into Burgundy. Its precise nature is unknown, but it was connected with the behavior of the governor of Burgundy, the Seigneur de Craon, who had been feathering his nest, in the Roman manner, out of the conquered province (Commynes himself observes in the Memoirs that de Craon's pillagings, *à la verité, estoient trop excessives*). Commynes failed once more, and was himself denounced to the King for favoring certain burgesses of Dijon in the matter of lodging men-at-arms. This, and one other unknown *petite suspection,* caused him to be recalled and sent to Florence. One might say dispassionately that up to now, considering results, Louis had not made much by his bargain; but he seems to have had, so far as his cool temperament allowed, a strong personal liking for his man. One may fail, and still be valuable; and the charm exhaled for us from Commynes' pages, his clear common sense and perspicacity, appealed to the King. We must remember also that Commynes had saved Louis' life. The mission to Florence had for its object the renewal of the ancient treaty between France and the Duchy of Milan. This business Commynes performed satisfactorily, and returned once more.

He found the King looking older, *ung peu envieilly,* and beginning to resign himself to the ill health which had come upon him. Louis welcomed him warmly, and discussed his affairs with him (Commynes says) more than ever before; and—signal mark of favor and affection—he was ordered to sleep near the King. Others, says Commynes modestly, were more worthy of this honor, but he (Louis) *"estoit si saige que on ne povoit faillir avec luy, mais que on luy obeyst seullement à ce qu'il commandoit, sans y riens adjouster du sien"*—he was so wise that one could not go wrong with him, provided only one obeyed his orders without qualification.

It is at this time (1476) that the La Trémoïlle affair shows its ugly head. The La Trémoïlles resign themselves for the time being to injustice, but take the precaution of making a protest on oath before a notary. Louis confirms the gift of their property to Commynes by letters patent. Now Commynes' fortune is at its height. He is not merely Louis' trusted servant and the receptacle of his plans, but his intimate friend. In March, 1481, when Louis has his first stroke near Forges, he sends for his confessor and for Commynes and makes his confession in Commynes' presence. While the King is ill Commynes sleeps in his room and for a whole fortnight serves him like a valet—

"comme varlet de chambre, que je tenoye à grant honneur"—giving the sick man his food, arranging his room, nursing him.

In this place, amid this atmosphere of friendship and helplessness, the sound sense of Commynes flashes like lightning across his narrative. Despatches were read to the indomitable Louis, who, ill as he was, refused to relax his grip on business as long as he was able to move a finger. He tried to indicate his commands with regard to these despatches by making signs. "But," says Commynes significantly, "we made little haste to do anything in the matter, but awaited the end of his malady: for he was a master with whom it behooved one to drive straight"—*"car il estoit maistre avec lequel il falloit charrier droict."* This is one of the most famous of Commynes' judgments on his master, and has a ring of bronze.

Another stroke overtook Louis in the middle of this year. He recovered, and went for his convalescence to Commynes' house at Argenton. Here he gave Commynes another mission, a fairly involved and difficult one, and this time Commynes acquitted himself perfectly. The affair is in a way a microcosm of all Louis' diplomacy, and is therefore worthy of that careful study which an artist anxious to learn Michael Angelo's secret of color and form may devote to one small detail—a fringe of drapery, a scrap of cloud, the flesh of a minor limb—in one corner of some vast conception like the Sistine frescoes.

Yolande of France, Duchess of Savoy, died in 1478, leaving a thirteen-year-old son. The nobles of Savoy asked Louis XI to find them a regent until the boy's coming of age. Louis selected the Comte de la Chambre, whose methods before long dissatisfied Louis in the extreme. Louis therefore, as was his way, began operations in secret. Having privately ordered the Bishop of Geneva to prepare to take over the regency of Savoy, he issued instructions, likewise secret, to the boy's tutor, the Seigneur d'Illins, to carry his pupil into Dauphiny and await further orders. Unfortunately the secret became prematurely known. The Comte de la Chambre pursued d'Illins and the boy Duke, stopped them before they reached the Dauphiny border, and took d'Illins prisoner. To meet this situation and to defeat the man he had himself raised to power Louis XI had resource, as usual, to ruse. He gained over the Comte de Bresse by promising him the governorship of Savoy and ordered him to go into Dauphiny. It was arranged between them that Bresse should refuse, which he did. This is where Commynes enters on the scene. Commynes' orders were to go to Mâcon to head a body of troops assembled there to "subdue" Bresse, and to make a show of taking hostages to hold Bresse to obedience. The object underlying this was some means of approaching Savoy with an armed force without exciting the suspicions of Chambre. Commynes' further instructions were plainly detailed and successfully carried out. Bresse, at Turin, went out one day to hunt, returned unexpectedly with a large number of noblemen, seized Chambre, released d'Illins, and took over the government of Savoy. The young Duke was handed over to the care of Commynes and the Bastard of Burgundy, who accompanied him.

A small provincial affair, which passes almost unnoticed in the web of intrigue which makes up the reign of Louis XI. But what care! What attention to detail! What trouble for apparently little advantage—the changing of one governor of Savoy for another! But such were Louis' methods in great things and small: patience, secrecy, application, great pains, for any purpose whatsoever which might in any way serve the Realm of France.

Commynes returns once more, this time successful. He finds the King ill, but still doggedly traveling up and down the land. All who see Louis are amazed to find him so haggard and emaciated: but, adds Commynes, his great heart kept him going (*son grand cueur le portoit*). And since this is a sketch of Commynes and not of his master, one need not linger again over the astonishing amount of work performed by this sick old man in the five years between now and his death: the final settlement of Burgundy, the peace with the English, the attempt at changing Arras into *Franchise,* the acquisition of Anjou, the Austrian marriage treaty, a hundred things attempted and done; and accompanying all these, the growing mania for seclusion, the barricades of Plessis-les-Tours, the increasing gifts to shrines. Commynes is perpetually at the King's elbow, observing and recording. He remains there to the moment of Louis' death, of which his simple account is the only one, and a splendid piece of clear French prose.

And then the storm bursts. Hardly is Louis dead and buried before the La Trémoïlle family secure letters-patent for an inquiry to establish the fact that the King in his last moments has acknowledged their wrongs and admitted their right to redress. The lieutenant-general of the Governor of Touraine opens the inquiry. The Official (diocesan judge) of Tours has already, on considering the case, dispensed the La Trémoïlles from the oath of acquiescence they were forced to swear in 1480. Now Commynes, his friend the King being dead, is ordered by the Parlement to reply *pertinemment et peremptoirement,* pertinently and instantly, to the interrogatories.

He does so, and cuts a poor enough figure, for the facts are plain and he has not a leg to stand on. Nevertheless his counsel, Master Piedefer, uses all the cunning lawyer-tricks possible to delay the case, to temporize, to drag in side-issues, to confuse, to throw dust, to make the kind of defense which is the admiration of lawyers, then, now and evermore. He tries everything, and still cannot defeat justice. On March 9, 1486, after this *cause célèbre* has dragged on long enough to fatten the most conscientious advocate, the Court of Parlement makes its decision, and on March 22 issues its judgment, namely, that Messire Philippe de Commynes, Seigneur d'Argenton, is to disgorge the lands and lordship of Talmont and Château-Gaultier, the property of the complainants.

Commynes—alas, that human nature should have such unamiable aspects—will not give up the fight. He tries to evade the order. In June Charles VIII orders him to be seized and imprisoned and his property sequestrated unless he obeys the Court at once. Commynes at once appeals. There are more temporizing, more law tricks; the case becomes shadowy, then emerges again into broad daylight with Commynes' appeal dismissed and a final order (June, 1489), this time irrevocable and unescapable. The La Trémoïlles get their property, with full costs and a further sum covering the revenues received from their lands by Commynes during his long illegal possession. Commynes receives an indemnity of 30,000 livres, which helps him to meet this large bill. The case is over at last, and justice is done. Commynes has appeared throughout in an unfavorable light. There are certain anfractuosities (as Dr. Johnson would say) of the human mind which are not pretty.

§3

I propose compressing Commynes' career henceforward into as short a space as possible. He continues to serve Charles VIII as counselor, goes on a mission to Brittany, and in January, 1487, while his law case is still dragging on, we are surprised at finding him a prisoner in the castle of Loches, spending eight months in one of the iron cages, so-called, made to the order of his late master. ("Many people," he says ruefully in the Memoirs, "have since cursed him (Louis) for this—including myself, who had an eight months' taste of it under the present king.") The reason for this sudden drop in Commynes' fortunes may be briefly set down. The nobles of France are discontented with the regency of Anne de Beaujeu during Charles' legal infancy. Commynes, arguing the King's rights over Provence in the Council one day, arouses the anger of René of Lorraine, who has him expelled from Court then and there. Commynes takes refuge with Bourbon, one of the chief malcontents, and in the confused intriguing which follows Bourbon dismisses him and he goes to the Duke of Orleans. A scheme is set on foot to seize the young King (who is reported, truly or otherwise, to be not unfavorable to the proceeding), place him at the head of the malcontents, and substitute another government for Anne de Beaujeu's: but the plot is discovered and the principals arrested. Commynes is one, with the Bishop of Périgueux, Mgr. de Pompadour, the Bishop of Montauban, and others. After eight months' imprisonment at Loches Commynes is removed by order of Parlement to the Conciergerie in Paris, and the most extraordinary precautions are taken for guarding him. He is not allowed to exchange conversation even with the priest who comes into his prison every day to say Mass.

The trial follows. Commynes conducts his own defense, speaks for two hours, emphasizing his faithful service under Louis XI, his labors for the realm, and his own lack of ambition and avarice. The sentence is heavy, but not excessive: banishment to his estates during the King's pleasure, confiscation to the Crown of a quarter of his property, and a bail of 2000 crowns. One would think this a final disaster, but political men are not as others. After remaining for a year or so in banishment Commynes returns to the Council and resumes his duties as Mentor to the Crown. A campaign into Italy is eagerly occupying Charles VIII. Commynes knows it to be folly. Every prudent and reasonable man, he says, could not but censure it. But Charles is deaf to reason, sets off with his forces, ill equipped and lacking money particularly, crosses the Alps, and meets at first with success, owing to the Italians' unpreparedness and inexperience. Commynes, shrugging resignedly, goes with the army and is sent to Venice to exercise his subtlest argument to prevent the formation of a league of the Italian States against Charles. In vain. The league is formed, Charles is checked, and the French army turns homeward, weakened by the dropping here and there of ineffective garrisons to hold the enemy in check. The subsequent battle of Fornovo is a victory for the French, but Charles, instead of pressing the Italians, allows them to re-form and perpetually harass his march. Eventually Commynes prevails on him to open peace negotiations, and himself conducts them in a manner most likely to spare French susceptibilities. But two states defeat him again—Venice, which insists on alternatives to the peace terms, and Milan, whose slippery Duke offers nothing but promises.

The spectacular and foolish Italian adventure over, Commynes returns to his estate of Argenton, and soon afterwards Charles VIII dies. If acquisition is one of Commynes' failings, resentment is not. He spends six hours in prayer by the dead King's body, noting in the Memoirs that he bears Charles no rancor for the hardships he has suffered under him, "realizing that he was but young, and that it was none of his doing." The new King, Louis XII, formerly Duke of Orleans, receives

Commynes with noticeable coolness and appears to be unaware of his past services to the Crown. (It is true that Commynes' prudence and repeated warnings during the late Italian affair cut across Orleans' ambitions more than once.) At all events the air at Court is chilly, and Commynes, grasping the situation, retires into country life: one would think this time once and for all.

Actually this is so, although the indefatigable man, unable to breathe away from the atmosphere which has been his native air for so long, tries in 1505, through his sister-in-law's friendship with the Queen, to get back into harness. The Queen is sympathetic, the King polite, even cordial; but nothing happens. After so much active participation in the business of the realm Commynes is forced henceforth to be a spectator; with what thoughts, what long meditations in the quiet of his country seat one may imagine.

He marries his daughter Jehanne in 1504 to René de Brosse, Comte de Penthièvre: a match chiefly interesting for the fact that some of Commynes' blood thereby flows in the veins of Louis XV of France. And the very last news of him is mixed with litigation, with lawsuits with neighbors in which he is twice ordered to pay the costs.

He died on October 18, 1511, aged 64, and was buried in a chapel he had founded in the church of the Grands-Augustins, on the river quay in Paris. His statue was taken from his tomb when the church was destroyed at the Revolution, and is now in the Louvre. He has two fine architectural undertakings to his credit: he enlarged the great triple mass of the now ruined Château of Chinon in Touraine, of which the *Tour d'Argenton* bears his name, and he built the beautiful Flamboyant church of St. Etienne of Chinon, which bears his arms on its façade.

But his monument is the Memoirs, to which one returns again and again for their serene charm, their penetration, their grasp of men and politics, their wisdom. "Reading Commynes," says Désiré Nisard in his history of French literature, "one thinks of some of the greatest names in the history of letters. His remarks on the English parliamentary system recall Montesquieu; his recital of the deaths of Charles the Rash and Louis XI reminds me of Bossuet; and elsewhere in him I find the profound observation of Tacitus, with an added simplicity which clears away all suspicion of exaggeration."

There is a test, not too fantastic, whereby one may assess to one's own satisfaction and in some degree the attractiveness of certain figures in history. Would one like to be thrown into their company, say, in a country-house in the Hebrides in wild wintry weather, cut off from all other communication, so that there was no escape from their conversation and personality for a month or more? Some of the world's greatest fail to pass this rough but valuable test. Commynes is among the comparative few who, one thinks, would more than triumphantly survive it.

2

MASTER OLIVIER LE DAIM

§ 1

On November 6, 1470, Louis XI wrote to his chancellor, Pierre Doriole: "I am sending you my barber to see to the money which my lord the protonotary demands, for I can do nothing from this distance." This is the first mention in Louis' correspondence of Olivier le Daim, alias le Diable, who has afforded Victor Hugo and others so much scope for picturesque exercises. Examination of Master Olivier at close quarters deprives him of most of his macabre quality and leaves him still more odious; a monster of avarice, an unscrupulous practitioner of Big Business.

His name was Olivier Necker, and he was a native of the Flemish village of Thielt, near Ghent. In the year 1470 his name appears suddenly in Louis' household accounts opposite an expense charge for a journey from Amboise to Paris, "to take and apprehend a person of whom the King had expressly given him charge." By this year, therefore, he was already firmly established as a confidential servant of Louis, and carrying out a responsible mission; and by this year also his name had undergone its first charge. *Necker* is Flemish for the water-demon, the Nix or Kelpie of the Low Countries, and it is evident that Master Olivier's character was already sufficiently notorious, since his name was now turned, by common consent of those who had come in contact with him, into Olivier the Devil, *Olivier le Diable;* and thence by a popular euphemism, into *Olivier le Mauvais,* Olivier the Evil. By profession he was a barber-surgeon, which is honorable enough, and by March, 1466, he had acquired sufficient influence and eminence in his profession to approach Louis in the matter of a statute for the Corporation of Barber-Surgeons of France, which the King granted.

It seems that Olivier had entered Louis' service between 1456 and 1461, when Louis, then Dauphin, was Burgundy's guest in Flanders. Before very long he had become Louis' *premier barbier de corps,* and was a power.

His professional duties were neither onerous nor responsible. The Corporation of Barber-Surgeons (which is first mentioned in documents as early as the year 1302) was very jealously looked down upon and kept within limits by the higher branch of the profession, the haughty Corporation of Surgeons, whose patron was the doctor's saint, St. Cosmas, and who wore the long robe (*chirurgiens de longue robbe*), whereas the barber-surgeons wore the short (*chirurgiens de courte robbe*). The medieval barber-surgeon's province was not very clearly defined; he could perform very simple operations, such as mending fractures and removing boils; he could treat wounds which did not endanger life; he could make up simple prescriptions and furnish plasters and unguents; and of course his distinctive duty was to bleed at the prescribed seasons, and to shave. Towards the end of the fifteenth century increasing rivalry between the Surgeons of St. Cosmas and the Physicians of the Faculty of Medicine had benefited the barber-surgeons, whose position had become difficult, for the Physicians adopted them informally as assistants, and taught them the rudiments of the now indispensable arts of anatomy and dissection.[1] Thus Master Olivier le Mauvais, while he is not a qualified surgeon, is likewise not simply the traditional talkative (and receptive) barber. The statute he procured from Louis for his Corporation contains several clauses providing for the amelioration of public health. It is the least harmful thing Master Olivier is known to have achieved during his life; for before long he will carry bleeding from barber-surgery into other departments of his activities.

His intimacy with Louis began with professional services; and certain more important non-professional qualities, it is clear, the calculating eye of the King was not long in perceiving. Louis cared nothing for doctors and had a poor opinion of them; nevertheless Olivier le Mauvais, his barber-surgeon and valet, gained a relative ascendancy very swiftly over him. Throughout Louis' reign this confidential attendant is constantly at his right hand, and employed, as we shall see, on the most delicate missions. This is one more instance of Louis' predilection for the middle class, whom he could mold to his will, whom he could make or break with ease, and from whom he could exact perpetual and unremitting obedience.

In 1469 and 1470 the name of Olivier le Mauvais appears in the King's household accounts as having made several purchases in Louis' behalf. In 1470 he appears for the first time, as we have seen, in Louis' correspondence, on a responsible mission. in October, 1474, he has already become useful enough to be ennobled, with the King's permission to change his unfortunate name (another change—almost as if he were a British Financier!) to Olivier le Daim. In November, 1477, he becomes Comte de Meulan, a title carrying with it the respectable revenues of the woods, lands, and fishponds of that estate. Within a very few years more and more lucrative honors have accrued to him; he is captain of the Bridge of St. Cloud, guardian of the Warren of Rouvray (now the Bois de Boulogne, outside Paris), owner of the forest of Senart, seigneur and justiciary of Crone, and controller of the salt-tax (*gabelle*) at Neufchatel, and the fair and market at Soisy. From this time on his career is one long crescendo of increasing greed and exactions of every kind. One need not delve into the tedious and dirty details. Two or three examples out of a hundred may suffice for the moment. He procures the farming of the *gabelle* at Senlis, and forces the town of Senlis to buy it back from him at more than 700 gold crowns. He worms himself into the farming of the revenues of the great abbey of St. Denis, bleeds the charge dry, and confiscates something like seven or eight thousand livres a year regularly.

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[1] Their history after this may be of interest. From 1498 onwards the Surgeons complained bitterly to the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine of this irregular competition. In 1505 the barber-surgeons were formally attached to the Faculty. In 1648 their surgical existence ended.

His subordinates are worthy of their master. The chief of them, Olivier's *âme damnée,* is Daniel Baert, a Fleming whom Olivier has brought to Paris from his own village, a kindred spirit who assists him in making the life of the inhabitants of St. Cloud difficult, imprisoning them on the flimsiest pretexts, squeezing ransoms, inflicting chains and even the question. Baert overreaches himself in the year 1477, when the Bishop of Paris, who has a certain jurisdiction in St. Cloud, sends an envoy to him demanding the release of a person whom Baert has thrust into prison at Montmartre. This envoy, Master Jehan Gaignon, a grave and respectable licentiate and advocate of the Court, Baert seizes in a fury and imprisons, loading him with chains so heavy (including a ball of iron of 300 pounds) that they can scarcely be knocked off next day, by which time the indignant Bishop has reported the matter to Parliament and immediate action is taken. Eighteen charges are brought against Baert; probably a fraction of his due. He is sent to the Conciergerie prison and put to the question. Meanwhile Master Olivier le Daim, alarmed at the consequences to himself, has seen the King and exercised his influence; Louis intervenes and transfers the case of Baert from the Court of Parliament to the Châtelet, where it is discreetly stifled by the Criminal Lieutenant, Pierre de la Dehors—the official who very nearly hanged François Villon in 1462. Baert's dominating passion after this incident will be thirst for revenge on the Parliament.

Another lieutenant of Master Olivier's, like Baert often esteeming himself, by reason of his powerful master's ascendancy over the King, to be above the law, is one Jehan Beauharnois, a native of Orleans, a barber-surgeon by profession. This man is the principal in the persecution of Master Martin de Bellefaye, of the Parliament, an old enemy of Olivier's. Bellefaye, issuing one day from Parliament, is seized in the very precincts by Beauharnois' sergeants and dragged away, first into a low tavern, then through the fields and back to Paris: his house meanwhile is searched and ransacked by Olivier's men and a number of them quartered on him. After some seven months of persecution (including the exaction of 200 crowns) Master Olivier brings against Bellefaye a trumped-up charge of treasonable correspondence with Burgundy and has him tried before a commission selected by himself. The power wielded by Olivier may be judged from such things.[2] He is so much in Louis' favor that he actually has the royal signature at his disposal, and Parliament, humiliated and flouted, is powerless to assert its dignity. Even when the faked charge against Bellefaye fails he (and two others arrested with him) cannot appeal; he is forced to content himself for the time with making a sworn statement in the presence of a notary. It is impossible to acquit Louis XI of negligence in this matter.

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[2] But it is to be noted that the records of his trial are incomplete.

With one more example[3] of the behavior of Master Olivier's men, this time of the rank and file, we may proceed. On St. Denis' day, October 9, 1477, one Master Nicolas le François, a man advanced in age and of honorable position, procurator to the Court of Parliament, resident in the hamlet of Le Roule, now in the heart of fashionable Paris, is riding tranquilly with a friend, Master Loys Dehan, along "the great high-road beneath the mount of Montmartre" (*par le grant chemin public qui est au-dessoubz de la montaigne de Montmartre*), on the way to the shrine of St. Denis. While they are still on the fringe of the warren of Rouvray, of which Olivier le Daim is Warden, four sergeants of the warren wearing le Daim's livery, all armed with swords, daggers, and sticks, rush out into their road, shouting "Death! death! Dismount! Dismount!" Master Nicolas le François believes them to be jesting, but soon discovers his mistake. "Get down, rascal!" they roar; and coming up to the procurator of Parliament they strip him of his short sword, his spurs, a gold ring, and three crowns and twelve sous from his pouch, and commandeer the hackney on which he is riding. They then, making insulting references to the recent conflict between Baert and the Parliament, force the old man to walk across country to the village of Chaillot, where they lock him in an abandoned tower full of rubbish, informing him that they are taking him next day to Meulan, Master Olivier's house. The other traveler, Dehan, having no connection with Parliament, has meanwhile been allowed to proceed.

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[3] Criminal Archives of Parliament, X2a. 40.

The wife of Master le François, on hearing of the affair, hastens at once to the King and complains; Louis replies that it has just been reported to him that her husband has taken and killed a hare on the royal warren,[4] and assures her that by supplying a new hare he shall be at once acquitted. But by this time, in spite of the King's order (which may not have reached them), Master Olivier's men have exacted fines from the procurator to the tune of forty francs and more, the price of twelve hares, exclusive of *douceurs* and of drinks (*buveries*); and the old man reaches Paris finally on foot at four in the morning. He immediately brings an action demanding an apology from his aggressors, to be made at all the crossroads of Paris (each man barefoot and in his shirt, carrying a wax torch of 4 livres, according to the custom of such *amendes*), the return of his hackney, or alternatively twenty-six crowns, its value, and the return of all the money and property they took from him. The affair is flagrant, and the defendants, pleading ignorance and irresponsibility, are declared by the Court to have acted in a manner *torcionnaire, inique et abusif*. Each of them is fined fifteen gold crowns and forced to apologize. For his horse, which has disappeared, Master le François gets fifteen crowns more.

Such are the servants of Olivier le Daim and their actions, which throw such light on the position of their master, the cynical manner in which he exploits it, and the infatuation of the King for this man's qualities.

Master Olivier's business methods may be left aside for the moment, and his other activities studied. Some general idea of the nature of his employment directly in Louis' service can be gathered from Louis' correspondence. Thus in May, 1478, Louis writes to the citizens of Arras: "Dear and well-beloved, we are about to send to you our well-beloved and loyal counselor Maſter Olivier le Daim to take charge of the victualling of our forces. . . ." In 1480 Louis writes to the Parliament ordering them to leave one François Perreau in possession of the office awarded him by the King. This letter is a typical example of Louis' whipcracking manner. "When you have offices to give, you can give them to your own people; as for mine, I intend to dispose of them as I please, and not as you please; and there is no need for you to heat yourselves (*et ne vous en tuez plus la teſte*) any more in this affair, for I will have it thus, and if any one crosses me I shall not be pleased. I have charged Maſter Olivier, Captain of Meulan, to tell you more about my intention. Be so good as to believe what he will say to you in this matter, as if he were myself."

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[4] The stringency of the forest laws at this time was excessive.

In 1481, on two occasions, Maſter Olivier is despatched to deal with an affair involving the chapter of St. Martin of Tours; and Louis, writing once more to Parliament, adds the same warning: "Pay attention to what he says in this matter as if I myself were there, and attend to it diligently night and day, until you have concluded it, and let every other business drop." In another letter, addressed to Madame de Montsoreau, Maſter Olivier is seen to be charged with some of the King's correspondence:

> "Madame, my secretary forgot this morning to write to you by the hand of my barber. I am astonished to find that you have not written to me with news of this [measles] epidemic, and I beg you to do so at all times. I have written to my wife saying that she muſt go to Montrichard with all her household; when she wishes to come to see the children she can come, and you with her, but bring only a few people with you. Adieu, Madame."

His name crops up frequently in the royal accounts, showing him sometimes in the light of a confidential valet and groom of the chamber, sometimes, as we have seen, as an envoy charged with important missions, sometimes secret, sometimes as a maître d'hôtel. Thus in 1468, before Louis' illness begins to take on permanency, Olivier le Daim supervises the furnishing of his bedchamber. "To Olivier le Mauvais, the King's barber," runs an item in the treasurer's accounts in June of this year, "103 sols 9 deniers, to reimburse him a like sum which he supplied at the King's order for the purchase of two double mirrors for the said Lord." The mirrors are to brighten Louis' bedchamber, at his doctors' advice. At other times Olivier is purchasing medicine for the King; at other times supplying petty cash for small expenses. His position in the Household is therefore strong, and he ranks equally in Louis' diplomatic corps.

The crowning incident of Master Olivier's diplomatic career is a graver business than any so far cited, and one from which he emerges looking excessively foolish.

On January 5, 1477, Charles the Rash, Duke of Burgundy, fell at Nancy, whereby Louis XI was freed forever of his worst enemy. He at once, as we have seen, set impatiently about securing the Burgundian lands in France to the Crown. The Duchess Marie, the young heiress of Burgundy, had already, immediately after her father's death, issued a manifesto declaring that the Duchy of Burgundy never was part of the French dominions. It was the immediate intention of Louis to bring this girl to reason and to guide her into the way of right thinking; and for this purpose an ambassador was despatched to her at Ghent with instructions to seek a private interview and to discuss the question of marriage with the Dauphin. The ambassador—and here again is a bright light thrown on the odd twists of Louis' mind—is no prelate or nobleman, but

Maſter Olivier le Daim, Comte de Meulan, barber-surgeon to the King.

Commynes, who has two similar diplomatic failures to his credit, describes the reception of this envoy with a malicious primness. The barber arrives at Ghent and is taken into the presence of the Duchess Marie, seated in her high chair of ſtate, the Duke of Clèves on one side of her and the Bishop of Liége on the other. One may imagine the freezing *hauteur* with which the daughter of the House of Burgundy gazes through the common fellow whom the French King has seen fit to send to her. The interview is highly unsuccessful. Maſter Olivier, having presented his credentials, inſiſts on speaking with the Duchess alone, and ſtubbornly refuses to broach his business otherwise. Certain of the Duchess' officers, resenting this insolence, hint not inaudibly that means can doubtless be found to make the fellow speak; and Maſter Olivier becomes frightened. The Duchess preserves her iciness, and the discomfited ambassador shortly takes his leave. The job, says Commynes blandly, was too big for such a man, and those who employed him were more to blame than he; and further (thinks Commynes) Maſter Olivier had not yet made up his mind what he was going to say to the Duchess. Commynes adds further that this mission was probably not the sole reason for Maſter Olivier's appearance in Ghent, but that he had some intention of ſtirring up some trouble, *quelque grant mutation,* in the town.

Master Olivier left the Duchess' presence, sped by the derisive laughter and jeſts of the Duchess' people, "partly on account of his low eſtate, partly on account of his demands." Especially, says Commynes, did the people of Ghent amuse themselves at his expense, and they played several japes, *aucuns tours de mocquerie,* on him. Maſter Olivier was well known in the

Ghent district, and doubtless not a few old scores were worked off in this manner. He slipped out of Ghent quickly and quietly, having been warned that he was in danger of being thrown into the river, and went on to Tournay, a neutral town, where he took his revenge by forcing the townsmen to admit a French force, which did a certain amount of damage.

His failure did not lessen Louis' esteem for him. In 1480 he has one more diplomatic mission, of an easier kind: the entertainment of the Cardinal de Bourbon, who is in Paris on some business involving Jean II, Duke of Bourbon. Master Olivier offers his guest a banquet and takes him hunting in the park of Vincennes. After this he retires once more discreetly into the background and takes up his ordinary occupations until the King's death. When Louis, very ill, goes to Amboise in September, 1482, one year before he dies, to instruct the young Dauphin Charles in his duties and hear him take the oath, the name of Olivier le Daim, according to the author of the *Chronique scandaleuse,* is among the names of those royal officers whom the child is strictly enjoined to keep in his service on ascending the throne.[5] It is Olivier also, according to one account, who was charged in August, 1483, with the announcement to Louis that his case was hopeless and that he must prepare himself to die.

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[5] ". . . Master Olivier le Diable, *dit* le Daim, his barber, and Jehan de Doyac, Governor of Auvergne; saying he had been well served by them, and that the said Olivier had performed many great services . . . and ordering him (the Dauphin Charles) to retain him and keep him in his service and in the offices and properties which he (Louis) had bestowed on him."

Thus Jehan de Roye. In the official copy of Louis' recommendations to his son registered by Parliament no names are mentioned, but the King's officers are generally recommended.

§ 2

Louis dies, and within fifteen days the storm bursts on Master Olivier, as on other favorites of the King. Through the years of his service he has been piling up riches by every kind of chicanery, blackmail, extortion, abuse of power, violence, and vulgar theft. In this he has been ably assisted by his right-hand man Daniel Baert, Beauharnois, and others; and as soon as the King, his friend, is dead, Master Olivier's victims and enemies are upon him, thirsting not so much for his blood as for his booty. In the November of 1483 we perceive Olivier and his lieutenant Baert lying in the Conciergerie prison, awaiting trial. The Duke of Orleans demands that Olivier shall be handed over to him, as being under his jurisdiction, but after some temporizing he is brought before the Court of Parliament in mid-December. The interrogatory has not been preserved, but sufficient of the rest of the evidence is available to reveal the extent of Master Olivier's business operations. The horde of witnesses takes three months to file before the Court. Master Olivier or his subordinates are charged with illegal imprisonments and persecutions at St. Cloud and elsewhere, with extorting money, with ransoming prisoners harshly, with exacting blackmail, with illegal confiscation of money and property, even with plain theft, such as the abstraction by ruse of six silver cups from the Bishop of Nevers, an illuminated missal from a church, six Turkey carpets from a merchant. From a Lyons merchant the minions extracted 7,000 crowns by threatening him with a charge of lèse-majesté. Two merchants of Orleans, arrested on a similar trumped-up charge by Beauharnois, pay a large ransom. The townspeople of Tournay have not forgotten their little account of 1477 with Master Olivier, and appear against him. Another complainant is

Thomas Basin, Bishop of Lisieux, the historian, now Archbishop of Cæsarea, whose property was confiscated by Master Olivier after the Bishop came into conflict with Louis XI and was forced into exile.

The evidence piles itself up relentlessly. One may imagine Master Olivier blinking his hard eyes as the case against him grows blacker and blacker. His life in prison is none too comfortable, and he is receiving a fair taste of what was served to some of his victims: namely, he wears an iron ring around his left leg, with a festoon of chains attached to it so heavy that they have to be suspended from a thick iron belt round his waist. It is not intended that he shall escape, and the escape during the trial of one of his subordinates, connived at by certain officials of the Regent (Anne de Beaujeu) appointed by the late King, makes Parliament all the more determined that the chief defendant shall not slip through their hands; for Parliament has many scores to wipe off, and prestige is at stake.

Master Olivier at length complains of pain from his chains, and is medically examined. It is found that he has wounds on his legs and some internal trouble, due to the weight of the chains and the pressure of the heavy iron belt on his loins; and another leg-ring of iron is substituted for the belt. In January, 1484, his warder is changed, being under suspicion. In February Master Olivier makes another complaint, this time of the unsatisfactory administration of his estate. On May 12 the two Presidents and twenty-six counselors of the Court meet to digest the evidence and decide the sentence, which is delivered a week later. Master Olivier le Daim, Comte de Meulan, is to be hanged at Montfaucon, his estate confiscated, and the *parties civiles* to be satisfied out of it.

It is significant that after the sentence of death is delivered no notice of it is carried, in the customary manner, to Charles

VIII, who is out of Paris. Charles is a minor. The members of the royal Council are without exception of Louis XI's appointment, and they will undoubtedly press for the exercise of the royal clemency. So the Court of Parliament proceeds to carry out its sentence at once.

At seven in the morning of May 21 Master Olivier is warned to prepare himself for execution, and two friars are sent to assist him. Having made his sacramental confession he is confronted suddenly by the criminal *greffier* and questioned. He denies having concealed part of his booty. The *greffier* insists, pointing out that what money and property has been discovered so far is hardly enough to pay the costs of the prosecution.[6] Master Olivier denies having made a *cache:* he also denies responsibility for the arrest of one Master Etienne Duboys, a counselor of Parliament. At ten o'clock the executioner of Paris calls for him and the melancholy procession to the great gibbet of Montfaucon begins. Being arrived at Montfaucon, standing under the gallows with the executioner's men already fitting the rope, Master Olivier is once more questioned by the *greffier:* a cheerless few minutes, with the crows and ravens wheeling and crying overhead waiting to pick his dead eyes out. To the *greffier's* questions he replies with cold dry precision, denying certain other charges and indicating the author of one offense. The *greffier,* satisfied or (more probably) not, steps back and signs to the executioner, and Master Olivier le Daim, having requested to have his debts paid, is swung off. His end has been courageous.

The young King Charles VIII, meanwhile, is at Meaux, on his way to Rheims for coronation. At the news that Master Olivier's business is concluded he expresses astonishment, and orders Parliament to have the body taken down and buried in consecrated ground; which is done, at the cemetery of St. Laurent, with three sung Masses of requiem in the church.

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[6] The Duke of Orleans eventually claimed and was awarded a considerable part of it.

Daniel Baert is hanged on the same gibbet fifteen days afterwards. The lower sergeants employed by him and by Master Olivier had specialized in holding up and fining burgesses on various pretexts on the lonely roads between Chaillot and Montmartre and in the vicinity of Le Roule, and in, so to speak, general "Class III" intimidation. They plead that they were under orders, and get off.

"Who will assure us," observes M. Pierre Champion, "that the case of Olivier le Daim does not require complete revision?" It would seem that there was some flaw in the sentence, for Master Olivier, whatever his operations, had no murder laid to his charge. The documents of the trial which survive are incomplete. One assassination only is mentioned in the *dossier;* it is not brought home to Master Olivier. There is a reasonable explanation for this, however; namely, that Olivier had such control of some of the King's affairs that he could, if an awkward death occurred at the hands of his servants, immediately provide a letter of remission. Possibly this fact accounts for his blamelessness in this one department. Nevertheless the haste with which his sentence was carried out, the determined prevention of any appeal to Charles VIII, the two successive questionings on the morning of execution, the second on the very steps of the gallows, the burial in consecrated ground—all these things have significance. And some unwilling admiration must be spared for the hard courage with which "the terrible Figaro"—the phrase is Hugo's—met his end.

There is no portrait and no physical description of him extant, and it is curious to observe how divergent are the impressions his personality has made on three great Romantics. To Sir Walter Scott Master Olivier appears ". . . a little, pale meagre man, whose black silk jerkin and hose, without either coat, cloak, or cassock, formed a dress ill-qualified to set off to advantage a very ordinary person. He carried a silver basin in his hand, and a napkin flung over his hand indicated his menial capacity. His visage was penetrating and quick, although he endeavored to banish such expression from his features by keeping his eyes fixed on the ground, while, with the stealthy and quiet pace of a cat, he seemed modestly rather to glide rather than to walk through the apartment. . . . At present he spoke earnestly for a few moments with the Count de Dunois, who instantly left the chamber, while the tonsor glided quietly back towards the royal apartment whence he had issued, every one giving place to him; which civility he only acknowledged by the most humble inclination of the body, excepting in a very few instances, where he made one or two persons the subject of envy to all the other courtiers by whispering a single word in their ears; and at the same time muttering something of the duties of his place, he escaped from their replies, as well as from the eager solicitations of those who wished to attract his notice."[7]

Beaumarchais' Figaro, without his wit and impudence, crossed with Uriah Heep. The obvious falsity, on first principles, of the portrait lies in its degradation of Olivier to the status of a lackey. Such a figure as Sir Walter's imagination supplies would never have undertaken the Ghent embassy, nor held nor exercised such power. Victor Hugo's portrait is more plausible:

"A vigorous man with dumpy limbs, in military harness, with an emblazoned mantle, whose square features, pierced by protruding eyes and split by an immense mouth, with ears hidden under two large windscreens of flat hair, and no forehead, mingled the characteristics of the cat and the tiger."[8]

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[7] *Quentin Durward,* Chap. VIII.

Théodore de Banville's Olivier on the contrary is of the 1860's, and has a pretty taste for poetry and rhetoric:

> Olivier le Daim
>
> Are you going to say that you do not know the Ballade of the Hanged?
>
> Gringoire (repressing a shudder)
>
> What is that?
>
> Olivier le Daim
>
> The last ballade you composed.
>
> Gringoire (very frightened)
>
> That is not true!
>
> Olivier le Daim
>
> And who in our time but the illustrious poet Gringoire could compose a ballade equal to that, whose rhymes answer so exactly from one couplet to another, like the sounding of horns in the forest?[9]

Of the three, Hugo's seems the most likely approach to the physical portrait of a man in whom extreme lust for money was blended with brutality and cynicism. Beyond those mentioned in the available documents, a number of Master Olivier's activities have never been brought to light. Robert Gaguin, author of the chronicle called *Compendium de Origine et Gestis Francorum,* does not hesitate to accuse him of being a judge and executioner: *"Eras judex, lictor, et exitium."* But Gaguin is not reliable.

Olivier le Daim's is a repulsive, a vulgar, but not a sinister figure; no more sinister, indeed, than that of any bandit of modern Big Business whose underlings may carry out his orders, whatever they involve of oppression or worse, with an almost equal assurance of impunity. But in our age the principals are rarely troubled.

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[8] *Notre-Dame de Paris,* Bk. X, Chap. V.
[9] *Gringoire,* Sc. IV.

3

DR. JACQUES COICTIER

§ 1

The servants of Louis XI are many. There are tough, efficient soldiers like Antoine de Chabannes, Comte de Dammartin, late Grand Master of the Household to Charles VII, whose heart Louis, in the first heat of his accession, swore to throw to his dogs, and whom soon afterwards, revising his intention and repairing his mistake in his characteristic manner, he took back in his service, and never regretted it. There is Pierre de Brézé, Charles' Seneschal of Normandy, towards whom Louis acted likewise. There is Jehan Bourré of Anjou, the son of a burgess, an invaluable lieutenant, who gradually acquires the wealth, position, and fine tastes of a *grand seigneur*. There is Louis' chancellor and general of finances, Pierre Doriole, another of the middle class, son of a mayor of La Rochelle, a financial and administrative genius. There is the Breton Jehan de Montauban, Admiral of France; the Scotsman Guillaume de Menypeny; Jehan de Daillon, Governor of Dauphiny, whom Louis pleasantly calls "Maistre Jehan des Habiletez," Master John of the Clever Tricks. There is Tristan l'Hermite, whom Louis jovially calls his *compère,* a good intelligent old soldier whom the Romantics have turned into a bogey like Olivier le Daim, the instrument of Louis' vengeances, his private executioner; Tristan l'Hermite, Provost of Marshals, heavy in the hand, exercising his punitive authority like a sergeant-major, otherwise not decorative.[1] And there are a score more, all carefully selected and tested by Louis, cogs in the great machine of which he is engineer.

If some of these men mount to wealth it is by methods approved or winked at by Louis, who is often ready to stretch a point where a good servant is concerned. The wealth acquired legally by Commynes and illegally by Olivier le Daim in the King's service we have observed. There is a third man who comes in at the last of Louis' reign, but in time to reap a golden reward: like Olivier le Daim this man obtains and exercises an ascendancy over Louis by the practice of medicine, for although Louis has no great faith in doctors he keeps them around him for the sake of his work. This third man, whose rewards are so extraordinary, is Dr. Jacques Coictier.

We have already met Coictier at Louis' deathbed, a rough tyrant (the picture is Commynes'), who is not afraid to bully the dying King with oaths. We have heard him rasping and creaking to and fro, wielding absolute power in the dying King's chamber and in the household generally, casting malevolent glances in the King's presence at the saintly Francesco de Paula, bullying him also when occasion offers. The witness at St. Francesco's beatification process who alludes to this last incident sums up Dr. Coictier as *omnium regionum secretorum*

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[1] At Arras in 1477, for example, sixteen rebels are executed with extreme swiftness and efficiency by Tristan's officers. He became, in a mild way, a legend—Olivier Maillard mentions him in a sermon to illustrate the severe justice of Kings—but the sinister Tristan of romance is chiefly due to Claude de Seyssel in 1508. De Seyssel, observes M. Champion, blackened Louis XI to heighten the effect of his flattery of Louis XII. Contemporaries hardly mention Tristan.

atque negotiorum arbiter, a principal in every kind of confidential business. In his hands Louis XI, the despot, is as wax, and the maſter of France, worn to a shadow and very near his end, cringes to the man and offers him pathetic compliments.

At this time Coictier was possibly one of the richeſt men in France; richer even than Olivier le Daim, and, though free from criminal suspicion, fully as avaricious: a Burgundian of the Franche-Comté, a characteriſtic type of Burgundian, buſtling, ironic, ruthless. He was born in Poligny of a rich and honorable family of burgesses, and is presumed to have ſtudied medicine at the Burgundian University of Dôle, since there is no record of him in the regiſters of the Faculty of Medicine of Paris, or the great medicine schools of Montpellier.

Towards 1470 Coictier, having taken his degree, is in the service of Philip of Savoy. His mind is ſtrong and broad. He is a cultivated man, and no charlatan. In the Bibliothèque Nationale there is preserved some of his Latin correspondence, touching on mathematics, genealogy, heraldry, numismatics, geography, and other sciences. His medical reputation seems to have been high, though in the hiſtory of medicine his whole period appears ſtagnant and undiſtinguished, inclined to mingle occultism and alchemy with the pure word, and in ordinary practice, so far as one can observe casually, exercising chiefly the three ſtatutory operations celebrated in the exquisite ballet-burlesque which ends the *Malade Imaginaire:*

Cliſterium donare,
Poſtea seignare,
Ensuitta purgare,
Reseignare, repurgare, et recliſterisare!

It is Philip of Savoy who, perceiving in his doctor more valuable gifts than a dexterity in these arts, sends him on to Louis XI, on whom he makes an inſtant and profound impression. Coictier is seven years at Louis' court, and in these seven years he amasses a fortune by Louis' favor. On his arrival he finds other doctors in Louis' service, among them the Neapolitan Angelo Cato, physician in ordinary, *philosophe et médecin,* the friend of Commynes, to whom the Memoirs are dedicated,[2] the doctor who tends Louis after his stroke of March, 1418; Pierre Choisnet, the literary physician, co-author with Louis of "The Rosebush of War"; the surgeon Geoffroy Alenquin; Claude de Moulins, who attends the young Dauphin; and two or three more, not counting various astrological specialists already mentioned. All these Jacques Coictier surveys, and decides that one doctor only shall have the King's intimacy and entire confidence, and that doctor is himself; and accordingly he proceeds with such skill that he is very soon supreme in Louis' estimation and the rest maneuvered out. They remain at Court, and they attend the King, but Coictier is permanently at his right hand. He takes the precaution in August, 1475, being a Burgundian subject, of obtaining letters of naturalization as a French citizen, and his career begins.

A simple recital of the gifts Louis pours into the lap of this hard, skillful physician and diplomat will suffice. His first office (September, 1476) is that of *clerc ordinaire* to the Chamber of Accounts (*Chambre des Comptes*), a post worth some 280 livres a year, with such perquisites as gowns, gloves, writing-material, a horse, harness, and other things. The manner in which Coictier obtains this post will before long be repeated. He wants the post; it is occupied by one Jehan le Clerc; and before long Jehan le Clerc is ejected on an accusation of holding intelligence with the Duke of Guyenne and

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[2] Which no doubt explains Commynes' asperity against Coictier, who supplanted Cato. Louis rewarded Cato for his medical attentions in 1482 with a prebend's stall in the chapter of Vienne.

Coictier takes his place. In October of the following year Coictier is Vice-President of the Chambre des Comptes. In June of the next year Louis XI, being owed a considerable sum by one Riboteau, paymaster to the Free Archers of Champagne, recovers this money and divides it equally with his doctor. And so that we may not bring the charge of avarice too frivolously against this excellent man, it may be noted that he writes twice to the President of the Chamber—letters full of suavity and urgency—to have this gift confirmed in the usual legal manner.

In November, 1480, Louis grants Coictier certain rights over some English dues owned by the late Cauchon, Bishop of Beauvais, and a relative of his. In 1481 Louis, "in consideration of the good, agreeable, and continual services rendered now and formerly by our faithful and beloved counselor and doctor, Master Jacques Coictier, Vice-President of the Chambre des Comptes, for the conservation of our health, as much in his quality of doctor as otherwise," gives to Coictier and his heirs the revenues of the Maison-Dieu of Montmorillon, near Poitiers, amounting to more than 83 livres a year, exclusive of dues in kind, wine, wheat, barley, etc. Three months later, in May, there is added to this the lordship of the town and seigneury of Rouvres, near Dijon in Burgundy.

Here once more Dr. Coictier shows himself a man of business. The Chambre des Comptes of Dijon refuses to ratify this gift. Coictier hastens at once to render homage for it personally to Louis, who is ill, for if the King dies before this act is performed he will lose his prize. He is in time. The gift remains in his grip.

In September of this same year another large ripe plum drops into Coictier's mouth—the château and seigneuries of St. Germain-en-Laye and the manor of Poissy; and his royal patient is at this moment in a weak enough state to allow Coictier to elude payment of the heavy fees due on the transference of the property. In the same month Louis gives him a house in the precincts of Plessis-du-Parc, dispossessing the heirs of the Seigneur de Lude for this purpose. These gifts are a further reward for "the learned, praiseworthy, and recommendable services which our doctor Jacques Coictier renders to us daily."

The crowning glory of 1482, *annus mirabilis,* is nothing less than the bestowal on Coictier of the twin offices of First President of the Chambre des Comptes, which has been held by archbishops, bishops, and at least one prince of the Blood, and Bailli of the Palace. The First President is one of the most important men in France; his signature is appended to most of the royal ordinances and to important treaties. The salary of the Bailli of the Palace is 36,000 crowns a year, with considerable additional revenue from the rent of shops within the Palace enclosure and from various properties elsewhere in Paris, and rights over certain members of trade corporations, mercers and butchers chiefly. If the office of First President of the Chambre des Comptes is the more honorable, that of the Bailli is the more profitable; and once again Dr. Coictier has employed his private method of acquisition. The First Presidency is held by Jehan de Ladriesche, a Fleming grown old in politics, a man of elegant and cultivated mind and little political conscience, who had formerly been banished by the Burgundians from Ghent, had taken refuge with Luxembourg, Comte de Saint-Pol, and had then taken service with Louis. Ladriesche, whose past is not immaculate, is an easy prey. Behold him therefore removed from office on a charge of *plusieurs crimes et délits* and his place occupied immediately by our well-beloved doctor.

The Court of Parliament, perceiving jobbery, refuses to register the letters appointing Coictier to Ladriesche's post, alleging that these letters lack the proper form. On January 8, 1482, pressure (in the classic phrase) having been brought to bear, they yield a little, but qualify the usual formula of assent, *lecta, publicata, et registrata,* with a significant phrase granting Master Jacques Coictier possession of his two posts "in so far as his predecessors have administered them justly and according to the rules." This blow Coictier counters immediately by threatening the Parliament with Louis' personal displeasure, and on the 10th of January Parliament gives in and registers. There is nothing to be said, nothing to be done.

In October of this year Coictier is dispensed, by letters patent, sealed with the great royal seal of yellow wax, from carrying out the duties of First President when inconvenient, but the privileges and prerogatives of the office are reserved to him: also those of the Bailli, in a letter of six pages.

In November of this year another magnificent present falls to him: the lordship of his native town of Poligny, with the manor of Grimont and the bailiwick of Aval. Dr. Coictier, now Seigneur de Poligny, solemnly does homage for this windfall to his patron and patient in the traditional manner, kneeling bareheaded before Louis in the Palais Royal on February 20, 1483, placing his hands between Louis', taking the oath of fidelity, and exchanging the ceremonial kiss. Finally, in this same month, Louis adds to this latest gift the manors of Brazay and St. Jean-de-Losne, with a *grenier à sel* and a house at Dijon, himself paying the large sum necessary to compensate the Bailli of Dijon. In the letter which Louis sends to the Chambre des Comptes ordering the confirmation of this act he once more recalls the "great, praiseworthy, and commendable services" of Master Jacques Coictier, Seigneur de Poligny, and especially his successful treatment of "the very great malady with which we have been afflicted."

The tale of wealth and power heaped by the patient on his doctor (we must not forget to add to all this Coictier's salary of 10,000 crowns a month as chief physician to the King, and various perquisites from this and other offices pertaining to his profession) is sufficient almost to awaken envy in the bosom of a Harley Street specialist with a *clientèle* of foolish rich women. Coictier's psychological skill must be saluted. Louis, the strong man, had his weak point, upon which his doctor played unerringly; for it was Coictier's fortune to have gained Louis' ear in the last phase, when the King was fighting his sickness with all the desperation he could summon up, exerting all his powers to ward off death as long as possible until his life-work was achieved. There seems to me nothing ignoble in this, though several historians affect to treat it as the trembling of a despot stricken with terror in the face of dissolution. That Louis demonstrated his gratitude to his doctor too lavishly is indisputable, but that was his way.

On Louis' death the inevitable vengeance fell on Coictier's head, as on the heads of others of the King's favorites; but Coictier, though he could not escape the storm, emerged from it relatively unharmed. He had, it is needless to observe, acquired many enemies, as his manner of dexterously ousting men from coveted posts warranted; but it would be doing this strong and clever medical man an injustice to presume that operations of this kind were carried out by him blatantly and with arrogance. That was not Coictier's method. After having a man ejected from office he would immediately summon a secretary and, in suave and even glowing terms, recommend his victim for a subordinate place. Thus the aged Jehan de Ladriesche, from under whom he had slipped the First Presidency of the Chambre des Comptes, is not allowed to chew his disgrace and foment his hatred, but is recommended by Coictier in the kindest terms to Louis' good offices for an inferior post: in this case the Vice-Presidency of the Chamber from which he has just been ejected. In this manner does the politic doctor provide to some extent against the lean years and keep down the number of his personal foes.

In the September of the year of Louis' death, 1483, Charles VIII deprived Coictier of the Presidency in favor of Pierre Doriole, formerly Louis' chancellor and general of finances: and Coictier took the Vice-Presidency, Jehan de Ladriesche being finally dispossessed. Is this deprivation the disgrace it would appear? The young King, in the act of thus (very slightly) degrading Coictier, recognizes once more his services to Louis XI, carried out "with great care, trouble, pains, and personal assiduity, day and night." It is true that in the general sweeping revocation of Louis' reckless generosities with which the reign opens Parliament strips Coictier of his other places, awarding him in compensation, with a certain acid pleasure, the sum of one hundred francs Parisis. But Coictier can face this blow with equanimity; he is rich, rich enough to be able to lend Charles VIII on his accession some 23,000 livres, and to be able to wait fourteen years for the return of his money.

His high reputation as a doctor remains. In 1498 Louis XII, newly crowned, confirms Coictier's Vice-Presidency of the Chambre des Comptes with another eulogy. "Great esteem," runs the testimonial, "perfect confidence . . . loyalty . . . integrity . . . diligence . . . also in recognition of several good and great services performed by him in former years . . ." He retains his post as chief royal physician, with salary and perquisites, and when he finally retires from the Court he has two fine houses in which to meditate: the one the rich estate and seigneury of Aulnay, on the fringe of the forest of Bondy near Paris, which he bought in 1481, the other a town house in the Rue St. André-des-Arcs in Paris, over the great door of which stand statues of Our Lady and St. James, his patron, and a carved apricot-tree, *abricotier,* a pretty example of the punning heraldry, *heraldia cantans,* of the day: *abri-Coictier,* Coictier's retreat. Here he peacefully passes the last years of his wealthy old age in conducting an acrid lawsuit with a neighbor, and, at Aulnay, in collecting the dues from his estate, which includes the villages of Aulnay and Savigny. Every villager of Aulnay and Savigny pays eight different small taxes on every horse, among other dues. If a villager is too poor to pay his dues Coictier takes it out of him in manual labor. The Cluniac monks of Livry, whose house is on the estate, pay like the rest. One does not escape such a landlord.

§ 2

He died in October, 1505, at a ripe age. His will throws one more light on his character.

It is a well-worn cliché to represent such a man as Coictier endeavoring in an attack of conscience at the close of his life to make up his belated accounts with Heaven. In Coictier's case I do not think this cliché can be fairly employed, though the rich have their own dooms. He amassed his wealth by no criminal methods like those of Olivier le Daim. The manner in which he ousted men from desired places is not pleasing, but his charges against them were not outrageous, nor, in that period of divided allegiances, astonishing. Commynes, who shows him in such an unfavorable light at Louis' deathbed, is obviously prejudiced by his friendship for Dr. Angelo Cato, whom Coictier had worked out of the King's intimacy with his colleagues. Coictier was hard, ruthless, scheming, and avaricious, but not without a liberal breadth of mind or piety; and since in his day the very wealthy lacked that comfort which has since come in with Progress,

. . . the guarantee
From Lambeth that the Rich can never burn,
And even promising a safe return,

as also the benefits of Science, which now enable the rich to take their money with them when they die, Coictier in the preamble to his long will acknowledges devoutly what was then received opinion on this absorbing matter, and prepares himself to quit this life naked as when he was born into it.

His will shows him to possess, under his stiff and repellent crust, a certain benevolence. He leaves, for example, a hundred livres to his native town of Poligny to provide dowries for ten poor girls, and another sixty for six poor orphan girls of good character. He leaves twelve livres to the Hostel-Dieu of Poligny to found a bed, ten to the Hostel-Dieu of Aulnay for necessary repairs, and ten to the other hospital of the village, the Maladrerie, for the same purpose. Another bequest runs:

> Item, we give to Claude, nephew of Master Jehan Guy, archdeacon of Orleans, student of medicine at Paris, one hundred livres for aid and assistance in his studies, that he may become a qualified doctor, on the condition that he prays God for us.

One would like to know whether the medical student Claude was able to lay hands on this sum personally and in the lump, and if so, whether it went towards his studies; and if so, which studies. ("Youth! youth!" as the wine-merchant indulgently murmurs in *Zuleika Dobson.*)

Coictier's bequests to religious foundations are many: they include the Paris churches of St. Germain l'Auxerrois and St. Séverin; the Grande Confrérie aux Bourgeois, the famous lay confraternity of which Louis XI, Guillaume de Villon, and many princes and middle-class Parisians were members throughout the centuries; the houses of the four Mendicant Orders in Paris; the Augustinians of Le Blanc in Berry, in whose church Coictier's father was buried; the Dominicans and the Poor Clares of Poligny; the Bons-Hommes of Chaillot, a house founded by St. Francesco de Paula, and others. Coictier also, in the manner of his time, built and endowed a family chapel in his parish church of St. André-des-Arcs, where he was buried, founding a perpetual *obit* there. Dr. Chéreau observes that in 1722 the last of Coictier's direct line, the Marquis de Gourgues, perceived this chapel to be in decay and serving as a store-place for chairs.

The Coictier Chapel of St. Nicolas has vanished with the church of St. André-des-Arcs itself, which the sansculottes of '93 turned into a Temple of the Revolution and the First Empire swept away altogether. It was a thirteenth-century church of no particular architectural or historic interest, save perhaps for the fact that in the year 1694 its arches echoed to the squalls of an infant in the act of being christened by the names of François-Marie; his family name being Arouet, his name in literature Voltaire. The town house of Coictier in the Rue St. André-des-Arcs was pulled down in the eighteenth century. No trace of its owner remains.

Transierunt omnia tamquam umbra, et tamquam navis quae pertransit fluctuantem aquam, cujus non potest inveniri vestigium.

§ 3

So much for three of Louis' familiars. Their besetting vice is avarice, Commynes being born noble, Olivier le Daim and Coictier of the middle class. I have selected them from the cluster of Louis' servants, which includes better men, because they enjoyed close friendship and perpetual contact with their master, and also because they illustrate to the full that protruding trait of Louis', the lavishness with which he rewarded faithful service. Of this they took full advantage.

It is a commonplace that the more one reads history the more is the lust for money seen to be preëminent among human motives, and the more is it perceived in the very fabric of events. But for the avarice of the little new men, the Cecils and the Russells and the rest, who fought and scrambled like hogs in a trough under Henry VIII for the loot of the English Monasteries, churches, shrines, chantries, and hospitals, there would have been no determined block of rich men whose all was staked on the destruction of the Catholic Faith in England. The avarice of Marlborough in the early eighteenth century ruined us, as Swift said. The avarice of financiers and traders brought about the infamous Opium Wars in China and others which shame the nineteenth century. Out of the bloodshed and ruin of the Napoleonic Wars arose the wealth and power of the Rothschilds. Avarice founds Empires.

. . . "I cannot understand," says the King of Eldorado to Candide in Voltaire's master-work, "the passion you Europeans have for our yellow mud; however, take as much of it away as you will, and much good may it do you." He is speaking of the gold of which his roads are made.

VII

THE MERRY BOOK OF GENAPPE

THE MERRY BOOK OF GENAPPE

§ 1

“The Hundred New Tales,” *les Cent Nouvelles nouvelles,* told in the Dauphin Louis’ presence at the Château of Genappe, are less subtle, less literary than the *Decameron,* which professedly inspired their form; *“sans attaindre,”* says the anonymous compiler in his dedication to the Duke of Burgundy, *“le subtil et tresorné langage du Livre des Cent Nouvelles.”* They are also less didactic, more amusing, and more full of vigor than the Queen of Navarre’s *Heptameron.* They are, in fact, such tales as sportsmen in all ages exchange over their wine; jolly tales of cuckolds and amorous blades and light ladies, tales full of lusty health and exuberance, the good gross smacking gaiety of the Low Countries which is found in the canvases of Brauwer and Rubens and Teniers, and goes with keen crisp air and good hunting, huge eating and drinking, and bodies at once opulent and perfectly performing all the natural functions. Each tale is told in the highest of high spirits, and one hears, at the close of each, the gust of laughter as its teller bows and gives place to the next. In the plate at the beginning of the first printed edition—Antoine Vérard's of 1486—one sees the gentlemen grouped round the Dauphin Louis and Monseigneur de Bourgogne, seated in a chamber with diamond-paned windows and pillars encrusted with the fleur-de-lys. Through the open window is a view of a castle on a hill. The Dauphin sits highest, on a dais, in a throne-like chair with the Dolphin embroidered at the back; the Duke a little lower at his side, wearing the collar of the Golden Fleece.

The supposition that Louis himself was the compiler of the *Cent Nouvelles nouvelles* endured a considerable time; but, as P. Champion has shown, it has all along rested on the following note added by Vérard in his 1486 edition to the epistle-dedicatory:

> *"Et notez que par toutes les nouvelles où il est dit par Monseigneur, il est entendu par Monseigneur le Dauphin, lequel depuis a succedé à la couronne, et est le roy Louys onzième."*
>
> [And let it be noted that everywhere in these Tales where the words "by Monseigneur" appear, they are understood to imply "by Monseigneur le Dauphin," who has since succeeded to the Crown and is now King Louis XI.]

But Vérard's edition is a reproduction, in the dialect of the Ile-de-France, of the original, of which the sole specimen extant is a MS. preserved at Glasgow, and this MS. does not contain Vérard's note. Moreover, "Monseigneur" is specifically named, elsewhere in the volume, "Monseigneur le Duc": that is, Burgundy. A century after this Brantôme, in his *Dames galantes,* relates that Louis was among the merry story-tellers at Genappe: but what Brantôme's luxuriant Southern imagination dictates is not invariably evidence. The Dauphin's presence is not once mentioned throughout the *Cent Nouvelles nouvelles,* though three members of his household contribute stories. The compiler, a man of some letters and talent, who knows his Poggio, appears under the name of "l'Acteur"; he is possibly, thinks Pierre Champion, Philippe de Loan, equerry to the Duke of Burgundy. "L'Acteur" has at least eleven, perhaps sixteen of the stories to his credit.

§ 2

It is (to the contemplative mind) pleasant and instructive to perceive how, the more things change, the more they are the same. These hundred stories, of which Burgundy himself tells fourteen, are essentially what one may hear today in any club or liner smoking-room, and are told for the most part with brevity, point, ingenuity, and an unflagging verve. Rabelais stole one of them—Poggio, or else Ariosto, was the original begetter—and made it with scarcely any alteration into Panurge's jovial story of the Ring of Hans Carvel. La Fontaine and Prior embroidered the same theme. Wycherley used another story for a scene in *Love in a Wood*. Cuckoldry, which has awakened so much honest ringing laughter down the ages (*"Les cocus,"* says M. Sacha Guitry truly in a recent comedy, *"sont toujours comiques"*) is naturally a fruitful topic. Our fathers, frank, deep-rooted in humanity, devoid of the greasier puritan hypocrisies, possessing a logical sense of values and especially aware of certain comic, humiliating aspects of the human body and its functioning, relished a seasonable jest on that antique affliction, as old as mankind, which the learned call *Cornutation;* which the sage Rondibilis declares to be the natural appanage of marriage; which has been the heritage of so many celebrated figures in history. "Lucullus, Cæsar, Pompey, Antony, Cato, many other notable men," observes Montaigne, "were cuckolds, and knew it, and created no uproar (*sans en exciter tumulte*). I myself know a hundred honest gentlemen in the same plight."

Philosophical, too, was Philip of Macedonia, who made a jest of his misfortune. The arch-booby Marcus Aurelius, whose writings are so divorced from all the Graces, wore the horns, as did Agamemnon, that gallant soldier, and Menelaus, husband of Helen. The catalogue as it descends the ages grows heavy with the names of the world's greatest men: Molière, Nelson, Shakespeare even (if one counts the Dark Lady), Voltaire even (if one counts Madame du Châtelet). "Sir," boomed Victor Hugo at a tactless dinner-guest, "allow me to inform you that all great men, without exception, have been cuckolds. Bonaparte was one. So am I." It was one of Anatole France's conversational pastimes to make a list of the famous. Fourier noted seventy-nine species of the cuckold. The joyous Brantôme, who dedicated a *discours* to sufferers from the distinction, was forced to recoil from his task by the very inexhaustible richness of the subject. Erasmus was of opinion that cuckoldry is best winked at by its victims, and patience their only remedy. Shakespeare turned it into a jolly chorus:

Take thou no scorn to wear the horn,
It was a crest ere thou wast born,
Thy father's father wore it!

as it is also the theme for a thousand tavern-songs, including that merry lyric in the Norman dialect beginning:

Or sus! or sus! par dessus tous les aultres
Begny soyt le coqu!

[Ho, ho! Ho, ho! O'er all the rest
May cuckolds be for ever blest!]

And this jovial acceptance lingered long, even in England. For how many centuries were the words "alderman" and "cuckold" synonymous? And did not the farcical comedy of *The London Cuckolds* on this theme afford the honest citizens of London unalloyed pleasure at its regular performance every Lord Mayor's Day throughout the eighteenth and even into the nineteenth century? From the beginning of time, indeed, the gravest thinkers have agreed in regarding it as an ill inevitable and common, like death and influenza, to all mankind, its only lenitive being a philosophic resignation. *"Faictes que vostre vertu estouffe vostre malheur,"* advises Montaigne, most charming of smiling philosophers. "Grin and bear it," cry the massed generations of mankind, for as long as women are women it must be endured. It is interesting to reflect that the last great English writer to approach cuckoldry in the traditional spirit was Lamb. What modern magazine would print his "Vision of Horns," which appeared in the *London Magazine* in 1825?

There is another topic which inspires laughter—but a bitter laughter—in the *Cent Nouvelles nouvelles*. The amorous adventures of those members of the religious Orders who constantly disgraced their habit, in an age when the vastness of the religious Orders rendered the inclusion of black sheep, backsliders, impostors, the indifferent, and a leaven of riffraff inevitable, are treated with the mockery and contempt which the medieval Catholic, when not vigorously damning them, was accustomed to bestow on such unworthy servants of the Church.[1] And in these tales, as in other collections throughout the later Middle Ages, the burden of contumely falls upon the Cordeliers, the sons of St. Francis, some of whom had by this time (one cannot indict a whole Order) fallen from their former estate and their Founder's ideal. The tramping friar, in the eyes of Blessed Sir Thomas More, Chancellor of England and greatest of English martyrs for the Faith, is a common vagabond, and so branded in the *Utopia.* In the *Cent Nouvelles nouvelles,* as in the *Heptameron,* the most scabrous adventures fall to the Cordeliers. Margaret of Navarre, who leaned so long and so strongly towards Calvinism, indeed displays exquisite zest in heaping contempt and hatred on the friars; and it is not without a certain equity that it happened, when on her dying bed she declared her remorse, repentance, and return to the Catholic Faith, that she was assoiled and given the Last Sacrament at the hands of a Cordelier, Friar Gilles Caillau. As for the runaway Franciscan, Friar François Rabelais, who shared her contempt, his convent of Fontenay was moral enough; but a religious house full of peasants from Brittany and the Vendée is hardly the refuge for a restless mind and an imagination drunk with profane letters. And Rabelais was one of those myriad younger sons who for centuries were pitchforked into religion with or without a vocation.

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[1] And not only poets, chroniclers, moralists, and other laymen. See for example the stinging diatribes in Latin verse of Archdeacon Peter of Blois and the "Dialogues" of St. Catherine of Siena.

"Gay and licentious," says the great and good Sir Walter Scott of the *Cent Nouvelles nouvelles.* "A collection well-known to book-collectors, in whose eyes (and the work is unfit for any other) the right edition is very precious." The description is more accurate than Scott's judgments on Louis XI; nor does the whole world (as a recent French critic has happily said of a virtuous English Don's attempt to prove that Horace's light loves were wholly imaginary) regard such matters with the eye of a Wesleyan pastor.[2] Light wives and *filles de joye,* jealous wittols, dashing young blades and *clercs,* merchants, tavern-companions, pilgrims, lawyers, gay noblemen, all the rich and free humanity of the time parades and frolics and postures through these hundred stories; and over all hangs the temperate sky of the North—of Brabant, *"qui est bonne marche et plaisante, fournye à droit et bien garnye de belles filles"* and of Hainault, *"bon et gracieux païs,"* and the Gothic splendor, the color and bustle of the great northern towns, London, Brussels, Bruges, Arras, Antwerp, Lille. Nor is there in these tales any of the tedious moralizing with which Dame Oysille, Parlamente, Dagoucin, Saffredent, and the rest of the company belabor the point in the *Heptameron.* The point is made neatly and without effort, the climax reached, and the next tale follows. The compiler, whether Philippe de Laon or another, is well aware of the art of story-telling, for it is permissible to believe that in assembling the volume finally he touched up many of the contributions, pared away digressions and *longueurs,* improved the point or quickened the action, and generally "edited" them. There is one contributor, nevertheless, whose story could need no such care: Antoine de la Sale, who is responsible for the brief rural farce (unquotable here) of Novel Fifty. De la Sale is the author of the profound and celebrated satire *The Fifteen Joys of Marriage* (about 1464), that miniature classic, gay, malicious, penetrating in psychology, delicious and more entertaining than the laborious Proustian exercises of today. De Loan's other contributors are likewise very difficult to quote here, since we are neither in fifteenth-century Flanders nor the guests of the Duke. They all alike begin their stories without any fussiness. For example, the charming Arcadian scene of Novel LXXXII, "The Mark," told by Monseigneur de Launoy, who begins:

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[2] Auguste Dupouy, "Horace"; Paris, 1928.

> *Or escoutez, s'il vous plaist, qu'il advint en notre chastellenie de Lisle, d'un bergier des champs et d'une pastorelle qui ensemble ou assez pres l'un de l'autre gardoient leurs brebiz.*

> [Now liſten, if you please, to what happened in our Caſtellany of Lisle to a shepherd of the fields and a young shepherdess, who kept their sheep together, or close enough.]

But (as appears in the very next sentence) this is not the genteel Arcadia of the Decorative Paſtoral School, though Theocritus would certainly recognize and hail it. The shepherd and shepherdess are no simpering figurines in silks and ribbons, handling dainty gilt crooks, languishing by cryſtal ſtreams, carving sonnets on trees, but apple-cheeked rustics of Flanders with youth, and spring, and appetite leaping in their blood. The ſtory has some pretty decorative touches nevertheless—Rubens with a tint of Watteau:

> *La bergiere se miſt à faire ung chapelet de florettes sur la rive d'ung fossé assez loignet de la balochouëre au bergier, disant la chansonnette jolye, et regardoit tousjours, pour veoir s'il reviendroit point à l'amorse; mais c'eſtoit la moindre de ses pensées.*

> [The shepherdess began to weave a garland of little flowers on the bank of a ditch, not very far away from the shepherd's seesaw, saying his song was pretty, and looking his way all the time, to see if he would return to the bait; but nothing was further from his mind.]

And the morals are completely rural and artless, and one hears the silvery laughter of the kind rural Nymphs, *sed faciles Nymphae risere*. Gay got very near this, the real thing, in "The Shepherd's Week"; but among the poets one muſt return to Theocritus for the same true savor of ruſticity.

Exquisitely of the soil also, but of a different character, is Philippe de Laon's ſtory of the country prieſt, Novel LXXIV. One morning the Seneschal of Boulogne, riding through a remote hamlet in the Boulonnais, heard a bell ringing, and, as it was nearly noon and he was ſtill some diſtance from the town where he had intended to hear his daily Mass, dismounted and entered the parish church *pour veoir Dieu en passant* (to contemplate God on his way). When the Seneschal entered the Elevation was already over; but the priest, glancing to one side as he stood at the altar, perceiving the great man kneeling, and gathering that he had come too late, beckoned to his clerk, had the wax-torch for the Elevation lighted afresh, and elevated the Sacred Host a second time for the Seneschal’s benefit —*leva encores une foiz Dieu, disant que c’estoit pour monseigneur le Seneschal*. Nor was this astonishing act, for which the Liturgy does not provide, enough for the simple fellow, but at the *Pax vobiscum* he politely refused to kiss the silver *pax,* after the now extinct medieval custom, before the Seneschal had done so. On which (says Philippe de Laon), the Seneschal, perceiving that good sense and order had no habitation there (*voyant que sagesse n’avoit illec lieu*), let the rustic have his way; and then, and not until then, was the Mass continued. There is in this short and doubtless true story, incidentally, the unfailing gracious mark of the Catholic country, that everyday ease and familiarity with the Holy Mysteries which is so shocking to minds accustomed to the cold, more formally decorous systems of the reform. So today in a Spanish village church you may see the priest pause a moment in the saying of his Mass to box the ears of a careless or inattentive altar-boy; and the tourist who is not *domestici Fidei* retires to write to the *Times*.

§ 3

There is one story in the *Cent Nouvelles nouvelles* which may be discussed at greater length. This is Novel LXII, which is much longer than the average, much less broad, and interesting for its attitude towards the English. The courtship scene in it, the indignant self-defense and sudden surrender of the fair, might well have been devised by Congreve. I translate, slightly abridging:

THE LXIInd NOVEL

The Lost Ring

by

Monseigneur de Quiévrain

"Now about the month of July certain negotiations and assemblies were held between the towns of Calais and Gravelines, near the Château d'Oye; in which assembly were many princes and great lords, both of France and of England, gathered to discuss and treat of the ransom of Monseigneur the Duke of Orleans, as then a prisoner of the King of England. And among this said embassy of England was the Cardinal of Winchester, who had come to this convention in high and noble state, with as many knights and squires as churchmen; among whom, with other persons of noble birth, was one John Stockton, gentleman-carver to the said Cardinal, and one Thomas Brampton, his cupbearer; which two, John and Thomas, loved each other as dearly, or even more, than two brothers, appearing in their vesture, harness, and attire as nearly alike as might be, and for the most part sharing one bedchamber; and never was it known that there was any quarrel, strife, or misunderstanding between them. Now when the said Cardinal had arrived at Calais, these two noble youths were allotted lodging at the hostel of one Richard Féry, which is the greatest house in the town of Calais, and a house in which great lords on arrival in the town during their journeying to and fro are accustomed to lodge. Now the said Richard was married to a wife of the nation of Holland, a beautiful and gracious woman, well pleased to receive guests; and during the said convention, which lasted for a good two months, these two were there, John Stockton and Thomas Brampton, both being of the age of about twenty-seven or twenty-eight, rosy and high in complexion, and delighting in feats of arms night and day.

"Now during this time, and in spite of the close friendship between these two companions in arms, the said John Stockton contrived, without the knowledge of the said Thomas, to find favor with his hostess and to pay her compliments, and continued so to do, with all the attentions and pretty courtesies which one is accustomed to expend in the pursuit of love; and at length became bold enough to pray for her sweet courtesy, that is to say, that he might become her lover and she his mistress. To which, thunderstruck by such a request, she answered him very coldly that she hated neither himself nor any other, nor would wish so to do, but bore love to all in worthiness and honor; that it would seem from his request that it was one she could not grant without great dishonor and scandal, and even danger to her life, and that for nothing in the world would she consent. To which the said John answered that she could very well accord him this grace, for he was a man who would guard her honor till death, and would rather die and be tormented than that she should suffer dishonor by his fault; and that she need have no fear in any way that her honor would not be cherished. So saying he began once more to pray her to grant his request, for that he would hold himself forever her servitor and loyal friend. To which she replied, as it were trembling, that in good faith he made her blood run cold with fear and terror at the thought of granting him his prayer; at which he approached her and prayed a kiss, which the ladies of England are very liberal of according (*ung baiser, dont les dames et damoiselles du pays d'Angleterre sont* *assez liberales d'accorder*); and as he kissed her he begged her sweetly to have no fear, for whatever might happen between them no living person should ever know. Whereupon she said to him:

" 'I see very well that I shall never escape you without granting your desire; and since it seems I am compelled to do something for you (always excepting any hurt to my dear honor), you know the ordinance issued by the seigneurs in this town of Calais, how that the head of every household is ordered to take duty, in person, once a week, with the night-watch on the ramparts of this town. Now since the seigneurs and nobles attached to Monseigneur the Cardinal, your master, are lodged here in great numbers, my husband has been able, through the good offices of certain of his friends towards my said Lord the Cardinal, to arrange that he has to perform only half a watch. Now you must understand that he has this duty next Thursday, from the night-bell till midnight. Therefore if, while my husband is on duty, you have anything to say to me, I will listen to it then very willingly; and I shall be in my chamber, with my maid.' At which reply John Stockton was very joyous.

"This was on a Monday, after dinner; and I must not omit now to relate that the aforesaid Thomas Brampton, without the knowledge of his friend Stockton, had also offered similar courtesies and requests to their hostess, who had refused to grant him anything except now to permit him to hope and now to fill him with despair, saying to him with remonstrances that he thought too little of her honor, and that if she were to grant what he desired, she knew very well that her husband and his relations and friends would take the life from her body. To which the said Thomas answered:

" 'My sweet lady and hostess, I bid you remember that I am of noble blood, and that for nothing that might happen to me would I do anything to your dishonor or danger; for that would not be becoming a gentleman. Believe strongly that I would guard your honor as my own, and that I would rather die than see it betrayed, whether to a friend or to any person in the world.'

> [The lady eventually yields to Thomas also, and appoints a rendezvous for the Thursday night from midnight to dawn, explaining that by the good offices of his friends her husband is enabled to get off with half a night-watch only, which duty he will perform during that time.]

"Now the next day, which was the said Thursday, at Vesper-time, after the bell had rung for the night-watch, John Stockton did not forget the hour which his hostess had appointed, and so going into her chamber he entered and found her alone; and she received him with great cheer, and a table was spread there. And he prayed her to let him sup with her, which at first she would not grant, saying that there might be danger if he were found with her. But at length she granted it, and after supper (which seemed to the said John exceeding long) he attained his desire. Now before he entered the chamber he had placed on one of his fingers a gold ring containing a fine large diamond, which might well be worth thirty gold nobles; and as they took their happiness together this ring fell from his finger into the bed, without his perceiving it. And when they had been together until after eleven of the clock, the lady prayed him very sweetly to accept the pleasure she had been able to afford him, and requested him to withdraw from the chamber, in order that she might not be discovered by her husband, whom she expected as soon as midnight was rung; praying him also to guard her honor as he had promised. At which he, fearing her said husband might return unexpectedly, rose and dressed and left the chamber as midnight sounded, being unaware of the diamond which he had left in the bed.

[John retires, and Thomas appears a moment later, finding the lady in a very charming state ot apprehension lest he might have encountered her husband, who had just (she said) left to go on duty. Thomas relieves her fears, and very lovingly they spend the time till dawn. During this time Thomas finds a ring in the bed, and prudently slips it on his finger. As the watch-bell rings at dawn he also takes his leave, with kisses.]

"Hardly had he departed when the said Richard Féry returned to his house from the night-watch, where he had been all night, mighty cold and weighed down with lack of sleep; and he found his wife rising from bed to order a fire to be made for him, after which he went to bed, for he was worn out. . . . And about two days after all this, as it is the English habit after hearing Mass to go to breakfast in a tavern, with the best wine (*comme les Anglois ont de coustume après qu'ilz ont oy la messe de aller desjeuner en la taverne, au meilleur vin*) the aforesaid John and Thomas found themselves in a company of other gentlemen and merchants, and all went to breakfast together, and Stockton and Brampton sat opposite one another. And as they ate, the said John Stockton looked at the hands of his friend Thomas, who wore on one finger the aforesaid great diamond; and having stared at it for some time, it seemed to John that it resembled one he had himself lost, he did not know when or where.

[He questions Thomas, who says the ring is his own. A dispute arising, soon warming into a quarrel, one of the merchants present appoints himself a referee. He takes charge of the diamond and makes his award, which is that the conflicting parties shall agree to state the case to the first man they meet outside the tavern, of whatever condition he may be, and that they shall abide by his decision. This they both agree to do. The whole company leave the tavern then, and the first man they meet outside is none other than the doubly-cuckolded Richard Féry, husband of the yielding fair.]

"The said Richard, having heard the complaint of both sides and having demanded of those present whether what was stated was true, and finding that the disputants had not submitted to have their quarrel adjudged and appeased by so notable a company, gave award declaring that the said diamond should remain with himself, and that neither of them should have it. At which the said Thomas, seeing that he had lost his treasure-trove, was greatly vexed, as was also the said John, who had lost it at first.

> [Thereupon Richard Féry goes his way, and Thomas invites the company into the tavern again and relates the whole story of his night adventure and the finding of the ring. John, highly astonished, reveals his earlier partaking of the lady's favor, and declares that his loss is the greater, since the diamond cost him a great deal. "Not at all," answers Thomas, "you had the bloom of the peach. Nor should you complain of our host's keeping the ring, considering what his wife has undergone."]

"So at the last John Stockton was sufficiently appeased for the loss of his diamond, since he could have nothing else. And at the tale of the adventure all those who were present began to laugh, and there was great joy and merriment. And after they had dined together they went their ways."

Thus the story of Monseigneur de Quiévrain, Bailli of Hainault. It is impossible, unless one were an Urquhart, a Berners, or a Machen, to capture the color and savor of the old French in a translation. Like many other of the *Nouvelles,* it is seemingly an authentic incident, or at least one founded on personal experience and embroidered. Apart from its merits as an amusing story it has the added merit, for its audience, of showing two English gentlemen to be two cads, oath-breakers, and wine-bibbers. There has hardly, indeed, been a time in history in which this would be received with indignant protest by a French auditory.

The twang and fragrance of some of these tales, so obviously smacking of the Flemish farm-kitchen, the blazing winter fireside, the roasting chestnuts, the red-cheeked company, the huge rustic guffaw, might seem strange in a Court atmosphere were it not that this was the age in which a Duke of Burgundy could momentarily find peace in the cottage of a charcoal-burner, and a Dauphin of France share the dinner of a peasant who years afterwards (the story is told by Erasmus) trudged to the King's house with a basket of fine turnips, for the last of which—since he had been unable to resist eating the rest on the way—Louis gave him a thousand pieces, in memory of the good days of his youth. In reading some of these more plainly rustic stories—*Les Cornes Marchandes, Le Curé Rasé, L'Oiseau en la Cage, Le Cocu Sauvé, L'Asne Retrouvé,* to take a few of the most obvious—one can see the *grand seigneur,* sweating and mud-splashed from the hunt, chuckling over his wayside cup of ale at the recital while his host of the moment, working up to the climax, roars a loud "Ho! Ho!" and the good wife in the background, arms akimbo, shakes her stout sides, and the hens and ducks fly cackling and quacking, and in the farmyard the horses' hoofs fret sparks from the cobbles, and the great man's servants grin. Within the week the story will be told at the Castle before the Dauphin and the Duke and, if approved by the company, duly added to Master Philippe's growing collection, to be engrossed by the Duke's scribes.

"He [the Dauphin Louis] was fond of low life," says Sir Walter, "and being himself a man of wit, enjoyed the jests and repartee of social conversation more than could have been expected from other points of his character." With which judgment, clearly labeled with its vintage year (1822), one may conclude the chapter.

VIII

THREE ECCLESIASTICS

1. Cardinal Jehan Balue
2. Bishop Thomas Basin
3. Friar Olivier Maillard

I

CARDINAL JEHAN BALUE

§ 1

On the night of Sunday, the seventeenth of November, 1468, those Parisian loungers crowding at gaze before the Hôtel de Picquet by the Church of the Blancs-Manteaux, near the Temple, were aware, from the blaze of wax candles at every window and from the snatches of music and bursts of laughter and conversation floating out into the winter night, that some high personage was giving a banquet. Earlier in the evening a continuous stream of brilliant guests had dismissed their torch-bearing lackeys and mules at the gates: noblemen, bishops, fur-robed dignitaries of Parliament, a Cardinal in his scarlet, eminent lawyers and clergy, members of the wealthy upper bourgeoisie, University magnates; and mingling with these, a sprinkling of pretty flower-faces, *bien joliz dames et demoiselles* of high and middle rank, in rich rustling gowns. Still earlier there had arrived a company of singers, *compaignons chantans de bouche,* a band of hurrying musicians carrying trumpets, *clairons,* strings, and portable organs, and a company of Morris dancers and comedians.

The house belonged to the brother of Monseigneur Jehan Balue, Bishop of Angers, who had that day in Notre Dame Cathedral received the Red Hat from Rome. The new Cardinal, little inclined by habit or temperament to spend the night on his knees, had taken his brother Nicolas' house to celebrate this occasion, and had invited to dinner all the notables who had witnessed the investiture. Monseigneur had spared no expense to make the banquet memorable. The tables sparkled with rich plate. The dishes were rare, elaborate, and profuse, the pastries and confectioneries delicious and ornate, the spices, sweets, and fruits of every kind, the wines varied and carefully chosen, *"vins de osoie, vins bastardz, vins blancs, vins de rosette, vins clairetz, vins rouges de divers päis et de divers goutz."* I quote the account of Jehan Maupoint of Paris, Bachelor of Theology, who was presumably a guest that night, and entered his impressions in his Journal. Dominating the scene from his high chair, splendid in his new scarlet robes, sits Cardinal Jehan Balue, his tall figure now inclining to stoutness, his features spare, his nose long and aquiline, his eyes (as can be seen in his portrait) brooding in shrewdness and policy, his mouth slightly, perpetually lifted at the corners in a faint smile of irony and ruse, *un fin sourire.* The Cardinal's hospitality is princely and not untinged with the ostentation of the parvenu, for he is of obscure origin and his rise to eminence has been rapid. During the leisurely progress of the banquet his guests are entertained with music, stringed and brazen, with singing, with the Morris, and with comedy interludes; and among the players in one interlude there appears a fool dressed to resemble his Eminence, who enters saying, with that frankness of impudence which great men's clowns employed unscathed: *"Je fay feu, je fay raige, je fay bruit, je fay tout, il n'est nouvelles que de* *moy!"*[1] At which stroke the Cardinal no doubt laughs as heartily as any.

The fool's jape was accurate. The career of Jehan Balue, which reached its summit on this festal night, had been one long *réclame*. He was a politician and an intriguer born, fond, like his type, of women and pleasure; the son of a minor Poitevin official, who had deliberately taken Orders as the quickest means of rising in the world and making his fortune. While a country priest he had attracted the notice of Jehan Jouvenel des Ursins, Bishop of Poitiers, his diocesan, by his energy, astuteness, and cultivated mind. The bishop made Balue his executor. By 1461, at the age of forty, he was *grand vicaire* to the Bishop of Angers, who had also noticed him, and a friend of the noble debauchee Charles de Melun, whose tastes he shared and whose morals were his own. Charles de Melun, perceiving the gifts of finesse with which Balue was amply provided, brought him to the notice of Louis XI, whose keen eye at once appraised him at his value as a political tool; and Balue became in succession royal secretary and chaplain, canon of Angers, *clerc* to the Parliament, and Abbot of St. Jean d'Angely, in 1465 was raised to the see of Evreux in Normandy, two years later to the see of Angers. Now his feet were firmly set on the golden ladder, he was the protégé of the King and one of his intimate counselors, and his own brains would do the rest.

Let us return for a space to the November Sunday of 1468 with which this chapter opened. If the Cardinal's banquet was splendid, the ceremony of investiture at the Cathedral earlier in the day had been even more so. The Cardinal of Avignon presided. All the notables of France were there, the Duke of

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[1] Literally (which is the better way in this instance): "I make fire, I make commotion, I make noise, I make everything; there is no news except of me!"

Bourbon, the Archbishop of Lyons, the Bishop of Paris, the Chancellor, the Parliament, the Law, the Clergy, the high Bourgeoisie, and the Parisian mob, curious to contemplate the figure of the successful man. The Red Hat, carrying with it the title of Cardinal of Santa Suzanna, had been placed on Balue's head with the customary solemnity. During the ages the Hat has been placed on the heads of many different kinds of men: on statesmen's heads like Wolsey's and learned heads like Bellarmine's and saintly heads like Fisher's,[2] noble heads like Newman's and evil heads like Borgia's; for the vastly greater part, among the thousands who have worn it, on the heads of good men. Its hanging tassels never framed a more vulgarly ambitious head than Balue's. And on this November morning, when Jehan Jouffroy, Cardinal of Albi, ascending the pulpit of Notre Dame to deliver the address before the investiture, surveyed for a brief moment the distinguished crowd around him and the new Cardinal sitting complacent in the choir, I can see his mouth curving in the ghost of a grim smile. For the Cardinal of Albi's address, as I read it over, is a masterpiece of satire. Balue, no doubt, was armed with the thick hide, *robur et aes triplex,* of his type, but even then some of the speaker's polished shafts must have gone home. "Yielding to the solicitations of our King," begins the Cardinal of Albi, "the Sovereign Pontiff has bestowed the splendid dignity of the Cardinalate on the Bishop of Angers, who indeed was unknown (*qui d'ailleurs estoit un inconnu*)." And proceeding with a studied panegyric of Louis XI's qualities as a ruler, the Cardinal with sardonic politeness sketches the character of Balue, his ambition and his meteoric rise, lauding "his intelligence, so pliant in all negotiations, his astonishing activity, his supreme ability. But these, after all, are common qualities, which many others might perhaps have displayed. It is to our King, the foremost of kings, that the honor of this dignity attaches."

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[2] Actually Fisher, saint and scholar, was martyred by Henry VIII before his formal investiture: witness the contemporary epigram (1535):

"Set he that Hat upon his head?"
—"Nay, chance so led
That by that time the Hat
Came he had no head."

The Cardinal quotes Plato's praise to Hiero of the only virtue, steadfastness of soul. Why, in the courts of Kings, are there such violent tempests that only the steadfast man can weather them? Because (as Cicero says *in Verrem*) we see with what hatred certain nobles attack the virtue and activity of new men! And the speaker waves a polite hand towards the choir. "The Reverend Father in God, the Bishop of Angers, does he not seem to you a man of unshakable courage, he who has by his own force of character triumphed over the envy of a whole Court? Does he not possess in the highest degree the merit of prudence, he who, becoming more and more agreeable to the King, has not only preserved but augmented his credit in the multiple affairs of business with which he has been charged? Does he not seem to you to have exercised vigilance and adaptability, he who (like Ulysses placed between the seductions of Calypso and Circe) has been able to steer his vessel through the midst of smoke and flame? . . . The Court, as a poet of comedy has said, requires a man to be cunning, hypocritical, and full of ruse, to know how to model his expression on his master's, to be virtuous with the virtuous, evil with the evil, pliant according to circumstances, pleasing at the same time to the crowd and to the King. . . . In order to become Cardinal and to take rank among the Princes of the Church it has been necessary for the Reverend Father, therefore, to be employed in the Court and to be purified like gold by fire. It has been necessary for him to hold opinion cheap, to be loaded with honors, to become a royal councilor, to develop himself in the practice of affairs, as in a gymnasium."

The irony, the contempt for the pushing intriguer are less than hardly veiled, and the suave emphasis on Balue's low origin and the swift ease of his progress, thanks to the King's favor and the indulgence of the Holy See, is a palpable hit, which must have sent a ripple of mirth over the faces confronting the orator. Pope Paul II was aware of Balue's private morals, and had for some time flatly refused to confer the Hat on him, though his predecessor Pius II had made it a promise. Louis XI's special ambassador to the Holy See had so persistently urged on the Pope that the stories in circulation in Paris and elsewhere concerning Balue were libels inspired by his enemies that Paul II had at length, with considerable misgivings, been persuaded to accede to Louis' repeated request in his favorite's behalf. No doubt the stories are grossly exaggerated. Possibly Balue is more tactless than immoral. And there are important political considerations. . . . So the Pope, shrugging, yields eventually to the ambassador's insistence, observing ruefully, "I know the defects of this priest, and I am compelled to cover them with this Hat."

The Cardinal of Albi descends from the pulpit, the Hat is placed on Balue's head, and the ceremony is over. Had Balue, sitting impassive in the choir, winced at all during the address? I fancy not. He could afford to ignore such attacks. He was the King's right-hand man. He held rich benefices.[3] He was the man of the future, and any who stood in his way could look to themselves. I see no expression on Balue's features, save now and then a slight twitch of the mouth, as if he were smiling inwardly at some excellent jest. He is a lettered man; no doubt more than one passage of Martial occurs to his mind at this moment.

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[3] Abbacy of St. Jean d'Angely, 1465; abbacies of St. Eloi, and St. Thierry, 1467; Bishopric of Angers, June 1467; abbacy of Fécamp, 1468. All these were valuable.

§2

The activities of Balue, Bishop of Evreux, as co-governor of Paris with Charles de Melun during the revolt of the League of the Public Weal in 1465 have already been touched on in their place. He certainly performed his duties thoroughly and gave his patron good service. Jehan de Roye in his *Chronique scandaleuse* gives a picturesque glimpse of him mounting and commanding the night-watch on the walls of Paris:

> On Monday, the second of July, Master Jehan Balue, Bishop of Evreux, mounted the night-watch in the said town, having with him the company of the said Joachim Rouault, with bugles, trumpets, and other instruments, proceeding through the streets and along the ramparts: which was not customary for those going on watch duty.

This innovation and display with trumpets is characteristic of the man. He had a great deal in him of the *cabotin*. But in common justice his loyalty to his patron must be allowed to be unquestioned until the moment in 1469 when, to recover his lost position, ambition suggests to him a foolish gamble; as will appear in due course.

He won the Hat by services rendered incidentally to Louis but primarily to the Holy See, leading to the abrogation of the Pragmatic Sanction which Charles VII had established in 1438 at Bourges.[4] The Pragmatic gave the Gallicans a political and financial weapon against the Courts of Rome, for—is it necessary to make the observation?—there was no question of the Faith or discipline concerned; it was designed to check

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[4] The authenticity of a previous Pragmatic Sanction, supposed to have been established by St. Louis, is more than doubtful.

Papal control of the filling of bishoprics, benefices and ecclesiastical dignities in France by making these elective; it also checked the flow of *annates,* or first-fruits of a benefice, and other dues into the Roman Treasury. These claims more than two or three of the most devout Catholic Kings in Europe, stout sons of the Holy See, challenged in one age and another. The administrative officers of the Papacy not unnaturally hoped to see the Pragmatic Sanction speedily abolished, and it was Balue who was entrusted by the advisers of Pius II with the mission to Louis XI.

Balue's task was not too difficult. The great flaw of the Pragmatic was its placing of the power of election to high ecclesiastical office in the hands of the feudal nobles of France, Louis' chief menace, and a stumbling-block he was determined to remove. Such power was for his purpose (and for every purpose) infinitely more safely lodged in the hands of the Holy See, and any misunderstandings which might arise over such appointments could be more justly and easily settled at Rome than with the *grands seigneurs* at home. Add to these arguments the fact that the abrogation of the Pragmatic Sanction would enable Louis to assert his power in the eyes of Parliament, and the other fact that Louis was determined to suffer no political and lay authority in his kingdom but his own, and the relative ease of Balue's mission is evident. He had been promised the Red Hat by Pius II if he were successful, and he was. On November 27, 1461, Louis XI abrogated the Pragmatic Sanction at Tours, declaring that it had been established by his father in a time of schism and sedition and that it challenged Divine authority vested in the Holy See.[5]

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[5] But two years later Louis will protest against exactions of the Papal officials, and a year after this, in 1464, will maintain the right of the Crown to confer French benefices and forbid the payment of dues to the Roman Treasury. Thus he practically reëstablishes the Pragmatic, with the difference that now it is for the Crown and not the nobles to reserve the right of filling benefices. It is necessary

The facile success of Balue was received by the satirical Parisian populace with lampoons, pasquinades, and street-songs of a derisive nature, for they knew the man. On his elevation to the see of Evreux in 1465 a caricature appeared in Paris showing a king seated on his throne, with "Favor" written over his head, blowing into a trumpet, from the mouth of which there half emerged a winged ass with an episcopal mitre on his head. The rude doggerel underneath said:

Je ne suis pas encore tout né
Ne sorte hors de la trompe Faveur;
Et si ne say le Domine me,
Car norry suis de chardons sans saveur;
Mais Fortune, ou rien n'y a de seur,
Si m'a soufflé en ung bon evesché!
Qui est amy de Faveur, frere ou seur?
N'est ce pas bien, sans rien sçavoir prescher?

> [I am not yet completely born, nor wholly issued from the trumpet of Favor; neither do I know my *Domine me* (i.e., I am ignorant even of the Psalms), for I have been brought up on tasteless thistles. But Fortune which is all uncertain, has blown me into a good bishopric. Who is the friend of Favor, or brother, or sister? Is this not good fortune, when I do not even know how to preach?]

One may hear the street boys of Paris chanting this libel through their noses as the new Bishop of Evreux rides past on his mule, on business or (equally likely) pleasure. I have already quoted from the *Chronique scandaleuse* a pretty night-scene in which a party of armed men in the pay of Balue's enemies fall on him suddenly in a dark street, from which ambuscade he is only saved by the speed of his mule, and barely escapes with two wounds, one on the tonsure and another on the hand. It seems most likely that this was a political attempt,

to obtain Louis' permission before going to Rome to receive a bishopric or an abbacy, and also to declare to him ecclesiastical revenues under mortmain.

though Parisian gossip later attached the name of Jehanne du Bois, a noted beauty, to the affair. Charles de Melun, it appears, was now Balue's successful rival for the lady's favors. Their friendship had turned thereby to a bitter enmity, and Melun, though he stoutly denied any hand in this attack when Louis XI, furious at his favorite's mishap, ordered an inquiry, was not the man to stop at having the Bishop assassinated, and later declared as much. It is a trait in Louis which can hardly be decently excused that although he himself was devout he could for the purposes of his politics tolerate the open scandal of Balue's behavior. It has been observed that although Pius II had promised the Hat some time before 1461, Paul II, his successor, only yielded six years later to the insistent demands of Louis' ambassador. Though Balue was a man of cultivation and distinct intelligence his swift fortune and his Hat turned his head, and his security in the King's favor made him careless of appearances. This favor he was soon to lose. Meanwhile he spreads his sails to the favoring winds, and the Parisians grin, not with amiability, and the lampoons fly around. One poet, commiserating sarcastically with the Cardinal on having only 300,000 crowns' income, congratulates him on attracting the Pope's compassion and being lodged for nothing at the Sign of the Red Hat; and Balue, who, if he can laugh with his guests at the impertinence of a professional clown and remain unperturbed under a shower of barbed shafts from a colleague, has a temper, condescends to reply to this insult, and publishes a squib with an ominous refrain bidding the anonymous libeller take care of his skin, which may yet feed the fishes—*"On en fera du cyve aux poissons."*

The affair of Péronne in 1468, whereby Louis got himself into the clutches of Burgundy and barely got away with his life, has already been sufficiently surveyed. Balue's part in it has been constantly misrepresented. After Louis' return to Paris Balue's many enemies were eager to point out to the King that his favorite had betrayed him. Louis, still furious and smarting under the humiliations inflicted on him by Burgundy, found no difficulty in believing them, and a great many historians have handed on the charge as if it were proved. Actually it is, as far as can be gathered, untrue. Balue, a vulgar *arriviste* and a man whose life disgraced his sacred livery, was no traitor at Péronne. He had opened the peace negotiations with Burgundy, he had procured Louis a safe-conduct for the interview, he had continued the negotiations, he had distributed Louis' money-presents in the moment of crisis to certain of the Burgundian household, keeping back only half of it for himself; which is not treason, but thrift. From a letter written to him by Burgundy on the eve of Louis' arrival at Péronne, a letter in which Burgundy *affectueusement* desires his *très chier et especial amy* Balue to "look diligently to our affairs," *en nos matières,* it might possibly be deduced that the astute ambassador had ingratiated himself with Burgundy too successfully for the health of his own master's business; but it must be remembered that Charles the Rash wrote, as he acted, impulsively and in superlatives. Far from Balue's betraying Louis into the trap of Péronne, he was instrumental, with Commynes, in saving him. His whole interest prompted him in this. But Fortune is fickle and the favor of kings a bubble, and after Péronne Louis stripped Balue of some of his places and turned him out of the Council.

It is here that Balue, in order to win back his credit, attempts the dangerous gamble of creating difficulties in order to remove them. The man is excessively vain and presumptuous, even for a politician of his type, whose head is filled, as has been well said of the modern kind, with a sort of insane froth of vanity. It is this which spurs Balue to take the risk he is contemplating. "Our most violent passions," says La Rochefoucauld, "give us respite occasionally; vanity drives us always." The circumstances may be briefly repeated. Louis has compelled his brother Charles of France after Péronne to accept the duchy of Guyenne, down in the south, instead of Champagne, which borders the lands of Burgundy. This move infuriates Burgundy, who has his own reasons for wanting Charles of France as a neighbor; and he prevails on Balue, half-disgraced, unemployed, and waiting for a fresh opening, to try to persuade Charles, the *petit seigneur,* to refuse Guyenne and insist on Champagne. Balue's primary intention is presumably to bring Louis to remorse for dismissing him, and to prove himself, Balue, the indispensable diplomat. He joins with Haraucourt, Bishop of Verdun, another pushing politician, in the game, assuring Charles of France that the nobles are on his side; and a confidential letter written by Balue to Burgundy, informing him of the position of affairs and entrusted by Haraucourt to a courier, who sews it in his doublet, is intercepted by the King's agents. The two prelates are arrested and caged, Haraucourt in the Bastille, Balue in the château of Onzain. It is to be observed that neither of them will be brought to trial. Louis XI, in his anger, is content to have them under lock and key, and it is the protests of some of the clergy, headed by the Archbishop of Tours, which force him to set in motion the machinery of justice. It is not a simple matter to punish two high prelates, and when Louis in 1469 sends ambassadors to Rome to lay the business before the Pope and request him to despatch a commission to France the difficulty is discussed for some time before action is taken; for in canon law the accused are vassals to God and the Pope, whereas in civil law they are vassals to the King. In 1470, finally, Paul II sends a commission, but before long it is clear that agreement is impossible, and they leave. Louis demands fresh commissioners; but by this time Paul II is dead and Sixtus IV has succeeded him, and Sixtus' reply has not been preserved. It seems that nothing is done; and Louis (who is considered by certain of the cardinals at Rome not blameworthy) keeps his prisoners. He also takes upon himself to seize the property of both prelates as if they had been judged and found guilty. Balue is ruined, his career finished, his annual income of some 400,000 crowns, drawn from office and benefices and augmented by royal gifts, sequestrated. His two town houses, the Hôtel d'Evreux and a house in the Cloisters of Notre Dame, both richly and elegantly furnished, are stripped; his library of costly volumes (including several Terences, of which poet Balue was *aficionado,* a Seneca, and a Boccaccio, with the usual volumes of piety, canon law, and theology one expects to find on a prelate's bookshelves; and with these several volumes of history and a treatise on the Pragmatic Sanction)—his library, to which he clung devotedly when the first forebodings of disaster urged him to try to save the rest of his property by transferring it to his brother Nicolas, passes to the King. Among the manuscripts is a beautiful Livy which the Cardinal's copyists have not finished. Louis will have it finished at his own expense. And in the streets and taverns of Paris they sing derisively:

Maistre Jehan Balue
A perdu la vue
De ses eveschés;
Monsieur de Verdun
N'en a plus pas un;
Tous sont depeschés.

[Master Jehan Balue
Has lost to view
His sees, what ho!
Monsieur de Verdun
Has not even one:
They had to go.]

For the next eleven years, in spite of more than one appeal from the Papal Legate, Louis, the implacable, will hold Cardinal Balue a prisoner in the château-fortress of Loches and elsewhere; probably not in the cage of the legend, as I have already shown, but at any rate under strict guard. Balue, who had dabbled in treason, owed Louis his career, his fortune, his everything. Louis had made him, and against such men the vengeance of Louis was to be feared. But it is very necessary to discount the Balue legend still promulgated at Loches for the tourist's benefit by the cold truth that during his captivity the Cardinal spends ten hours a day at his books and continues to carry on some of his diocesan work; from which it is plain that his imprisonment is not completely devoid of comfort, and that the deep dark dungeon which is equally part of his story is fabulous. The Holy See meanwhile makes appeals to Louis at intervals, on principle, to release him, and in December, 1480, Louis, after a severe attack of epilepsy which turns his thoughts to other things than vengeance, at last does so at the request of the Legate and sends one of his doctors, Cyprian Chastel, to attend Balue, who is unwell.

§ 3

It would be insulting to such a man as Balue to assume that these twelve years of disgrace and punishment could break him. The condition of his release in 1480 is that he leaves

France on the spot and goes to Rome for good; and accordingly, as soon as he is fit to travel—an Italian historian, Garimberti, does not hesitate to charge him with feigning this illness, but there is no evidence for it—he sets out, reaching Rome in February 1481. Here, chastened by his late long interval of meditation and study, he remains for a time in the background, devoting himself steadily to winning the good graces of Sixtus IV, who indeed is soon attracted by Balue's talents, and before long is writing favorably to Louis in his behalf. In February, 1482, Louis restores Balue to his temporal rights, although he has placed a bishop of his own, Auger de Brye, in the see of Angers. In the December he grants Balue the revenue of some of his other benefices: and a month later Balue, having thoroughly prepared the stage for his reappearance, emerges and is created Archbishop of Albano by Sixtus.

Even as the career of some financier who has undergone a healthful and invigorating bankruptcy only to bob up again to the surface of the Golden River refreshed, so is the second career of Jehan Balue, which (since it no more concerns Louis XI) may be now condensed. A little after Louis' death behold Balue, armed with all the powers of a Papal Legate *a latere,* setting forth for France once more. Charles VIII's Council stops him at the frontier, where he remains for four months while the Council decides whether or not to allow him to enter France. Meanwhile Sixtus IV is despatching letters broadcast to the King, the Regent, the Council, all the most important men in France, in his ambassador's favor. The Council finally decides to admit him, but without permitting the exercise of his spiritual powers; and Balue (to whom this is no great loss), having made his entry, sets at once about ingratiating himself with the Dukes of Orleans and Brittany.

Within a comparatively short time the Italian Ambassador and Madame de Beaujeu, the Regent, are protesting in alarm against this dangerous man's interference in Franco-Italian policy. In the next year, 1484, he makes a solemn entry into his late cathedral town of Angers in all the pomp of a Legate, riding under a canopy of white damask emblazoned with his arms and upheld by gentlemen of the diocese, with a guard of men-at-arms, apparitors, clergy, and nobles. In February, 1485, having deftly made his peace with the Court and gathered in not a few fresh honors, he is seen riding triumphantly back on the road to Rome as Charles VIII's ambassador to the Holy See, with a pension of 2,000 livres. His legation has been fruitful. On his return to Rome, with plenary powers as protector of French affairs, he plunges with zest (and with some patriotism, and with skill) into the political game once more, conducting negotiations for Anne de Beaujeu at Milan, upholding the Duke of Lorraine's claim to the throne of Naples. The new Pope, Innocent VIII, like his predecessor, shows Balue distinct favor: it must be allowed that his punishment, while leaving his talents unimpaired, has improved his private morals. In 1489 he is appointed Protector of the Military Order of St. John of Jerusalem at Malta and is given the great abbacy of St. Waast near Arras. In 1490 he gets back his see of Angers, by arrangement with the occupant, Auger de Brye, who goes elsewhere. In March, 1491, now Bishop of Palestrina, he is empowered to negotiate with Bajazet II of Turkey in a delicate matter; and in the same year, having accompanied the Papal troops to suppress a revolt in the Marches of Ancona, he dies at Ripatransone near Ascoli, at the age of seventy, active and astute to the last.

He was buried in Rome, in that same Church of St. Praxedes where Browning's dying bishop, as worldly, as a-moral, as grasping as he, ordered his tomb of basalt with pillars of peach-blossom marble, rosy and flawless . . .

> And marble's language, Latin, pure, discreet,
> —Aha, ELUCESCEBAT, quoth our friend?
> No Tully, said I, Ulpian at the beſt!
> Evil and brief hath been my pilgrimage.

His brief epitaph, in picked Latin, Tully's own, by the hand of a friend (for he had a friend), has vanished.

Cardinal Jehan Balue, as M. Bainville has observed, is one of the victims of Louis XI's vengeance over whom sentimental hiſtory wrings its hands, with accusing looks at his tormentor. Whether Balue's punishment was deserved, whether it was too severe, may be roughly eſtimated even from this brief impression. Balue was not a churchman but a politician, and few tears need be waſted on those of his breed who take a chance in the dirty game and fail. He was no cardinal-ſtatesman like Langton, Beaufort, Wolsey, Richelieu, Ximenes, Mazarin, de Retz, but a man on a lower plane, a vulgar man; his sole ambition was to serve himself, and when (as happened) his diplomacy failed he emerged the richer for it, the occasion of 1468 alone excepted. His genius was dexterity. He was a business man.

Balue's character, summed up in one phrase, might juſtly have served him for epitaph. He had almoſt every moral taint except hypocrisy; which will undoubtedly ſtand him in good ſtead at the Day.

2

BISHOP THOMAS BASIN

§ 1

The apple-trees and spacious farms of Normandy; the valleys deep in grass; the rich rolling pastures; the beech-forests; the lucid Flamboyant churches; the stout horses and cattle; the immemorial butter of Isigny, the noble cheese of Pont l'Evêque,[1] the cider of the Auge; the glories of Bayeux and Rouen and Caen; the songs of the Cotentin: this is a land which breeds men, which matured the Race, vigorous, constructive, driving, masterful, which stamped its will from the Scottish Border to the Pyrenees, in Sicily and in Palestine; the Race which gave the Anglo-Saxons, with their thick blond heads and dull blue eyes and foolish wooden shacks, a government like bronze, laws, arts, massy great cathedrals and churches and castles of stone, and a place in the forefront of Europe. It is a refreshment to turn from the atmosphere in which such careerists as Jehan Balue live their flashy lives to contemplate a Norman of Normandy, a man of solid integrity and stout well-furnished mind: Basin, Bishop of Lisieux.

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[1] Which cheese (still a glory to mankind) Guillaume de Lorris was already celebrating in the *Roman de la Rose* in the thirteenth century.

He is not perfection. His hatred of Louis XI is rooted deep, like every Norman trait, and some pages of his history of the reigns of Charles VII and Louis are a tart corrective against the frequent hero-worshipping of Commynes. But apart from this prejudice (for which he had every excuse) Thomas Basin is an admirable type of the medieval bishop. The crozier in his hand is no ornament, but a shepherd's crook; the mitre fits a head filled with strong sense, ability, and conservative patriotism.

Basin was born in 1412 of a wealthy bourgeois family of Caudebec, near the Seine in the Caux country, and in his autobiographic *Breviloquium* he has recorded his harassed and anxious childhood; for from his third year to his eighth the Basin family were constantly on the move before the advance of the English and the laying waste of the Caux country. In 1415, when Henry V of England took Harfleur and overran the countryside, the Basins took refuge in Rouen with other fugitives. Here an epidemic broke out and they were forced to go on to Vernon until it had subsided, when they returned to Rouen. In 1417 Rouen became itself unsafe with riot and fighting and the threat of the English advance: the next stages of the unhappy pilgrimage are Falaise, then Rennes, across the Breton border, and finally Nantes, where the Basins were able to settle in relative peace until the Anglo-French treaty of Troyes in 1420 made it possible for them to return home to Caudebec, now an English town.

The upheavals, the drums and tramplings and disorder of these early years did not adversely affect Thomas Basin's intelligence or character. He was intended by his father to be bred, like all self-respecting Normans, for a lawyer, and in 1424, being twelve years old, he went up to the University of Paris under a private tutor; for his family had preserved its wealth. At seventeen, despite the age-limits of the statutes, the University authorities were compelled to award Basin his Mastership of Arts; and as there was yet no faculty of civil law at Paris he proceeded to the University of Louvain, Philip the Good of Burgundy's foundation, in our own time destroyed by the Barbarians and now flourishing again. He did not stay long at Louvain, for his father's influence made it possible for him to receive a bourse at the University of Pavia which an Italian bishop of Rouen had recently established in the gift of the Chapter. A few months with the Italian jurists, and Thomas Basin came home with his licentiate's diploma in civil law; after which a brief return visit to Louvain gave him his license in canon law. It may be perceived that his abilities were above the ordinary. He was now twenty-three years old, and on the threshold of a successful legal career.

But Basin's eyes were fixed on the Church, not the provincial bar; the Church held out to such men the highest office, though Basin, ambitious as he was, was not the type to be attracted to Orders by a vulgar motive. He made up his mind solidly, in the Norman fashion, went forthwith to Rome to offer his services to Eugenius IV, and was received by the Pope with marked cordiality and introduced into the society of the foremost scholars and men of letters in Rome, the cream of the intellect of Christendom. In such notable company young Basin steeped his eager mind for some time, until disastrous news from home sent him posting back to Caux, where the clashing of English oppression and Norman revolt had once more plunged the countryside in bloodshed and misery. The Basin family again migrated to Rouen, but here their position was little better than at home, for the city was famine-stricken and the hospitals full of starving sick. The elder Basin, alarmed before long at the altered health and depression of Thomas, ordered him back to Italy early in 1439. He started by sea, was forced by pirates in the Channel to take refuge in the Thames, and after lying some two months in London with a dangerous fever recovered and went on his way across the Alps to Ferrara, where a Church Council was in session to end the great schism between East and West. From Ferrara Basin, keenly following the Council's proceedings, went on to Florence, and when in September, 1439, the Greeks left Florence after the signing of a treaty of (temporary) union, Basin, who had meanwhile come in contact with the Cardinal-Archbishop of Otranto, accompanied this prelate on an embassy into Hungary. One may imagine with what zest the young Norman clerk absorbed impressions of this voyage at Mother Church's expense; the bright colors, the snow, the exotic music, the storks, the strange towns, the walls of Buda. In eight months he was back in Florence, to receive a canonry in Rouen from the Pope, with one or two lesser benefices. Thus equipped for his chosen career he returned to Normandy, his mind saturated with letters, classical and modern (in Italy he had met and mingled with Poggio and his circle, forerunners of the Renaissance) and enlarged by travel.

He took his stall in the Chapter of Rouen Cathedral, and six months later was given the professorship of Canon Law in the Schools of Caen, which the English government was expanding and encouraging as a counterblast to the French foundations; on the heels of which appointment there followed in rapid succession a canonry at Bayeux, a University advocateship, and the post of vicar-general to the diocese. By 1445 his abilities had singled him out sufficiently to get him employment in diplomacy. After the marriage of Henry VI of Lancaster to the niece of Charles VII, Edward Duke of York, the handsome and ambitious, immediately set about finding a French princess for his eldest son, and Canon Basin was among the envoys engaged in the negotiations to this end; and though they came to nothing Basin's reputation was visibly enhanced in the process; so much so that when the see of Lisieux fell vacant he was unanimously presented by the Chapter and instituted on October 11, 1447, by a bull of Nicolas V, at the age of thirty-five.

The old town of Lisieux in Calvados still retains traces of Basin's day, the cathedral in which he officiated, some beautiful Gothic houses of his age; and although the town was not then the center of international pilgrimage it is today, by the virtue of a little Carmelite saint, the medieval diocese was one of the most important in France, embracing a rich agricultural district deep in pasture and notable for stock-breeding, for cider, for dairies, and fat poultry. As Bishop of Lisieux Thomas Basin was also Count of Lisieux, sharing the town keys with the municipal authorities and the Captain of the watch: he also had *ex officio* a seat in the supreme Tribunal and Parliament of Normandy and on the royal Council. When the English rewarded Cauchon, Bishop of Beauvais (to which town he dared not return), for his martyring of St. Joan, they added to their money payments the see of Lisieux in 1432; his body had been thrown to the dogs five years before Basin's arrival.

The new bishop began his duties amid universal esteem. He had every qualification for ruling a diocese, for he was honorable, devout, energetic, lettered, efficient, of a vigorous intelligence, deep in the water, and perturbed by no kind of ambition unworthy of his pastoral office. He at once showed himself an indefatigable governor of his flock, maintaining discipline, correcting abuses, punishing lapses, and was yet loved. On ascending the throne he had found arrayed against him a pestilent swarm of lawyers, attorneys and advocates, banded together throughout his province with the device "All for the King, nothing for the Church," striving in every way (and with no great opposition from the royal officials) to hamper their diocesan and cheat him of his dues. Three bishops of Normandy had recently resigned in the face of perpetual harassment; but this was not Basin's way. He was a lawyer himself. He immediately gathered and employed against the opposition, at his own expense, a sufficient number of persons of the trade; and although they cheated him whenever they could do so without discovery (as is the nature of the tribe) he was able to establish his dignity and make himself sufficient master of his own house. It is a pleasant thing to contemplate the Basin family at this time: the honor in which Thomas was held had reflected on them all, and from being merely wealthy and esteemed burgesses they had risen to acquiring fiefs around Lisieux, Caudebec, and Rouen. The solid, grave, excellent people! What is there on earth better of God's creatures than the good middle class?

Two years after Basin's accession to the see he was called upon to exercise his powers of handling a difficult situation. Early on a May morning in 1449 he is in a street in Rouen with two other Norman bishops, having been summoned by the Duke of Somerset, Lieutenant-General of Normandy, to receive information of an English raid into Brittany, when a sweating courier clatters into the town and on to the Château with news that the King of France's troops are before the citadel of Pont de L'Arche, only four leagues away. The three bishops hasten to the fortress-château of Rouen, the seat of the English government in Normandy (Basin tells the story) and find Somerset half-dressed, storming to and fro, raging at his captains for their slowness, gesticulating, stamping, pointing to the river and the Pont de L'Arche road in a fury of impatience. Soon another courier gallops in with full news of disaster, reporting that the citadel of Pont de L'Arche has been taken by the French; and Somerset falls at once into a stupor of despair. Basin addresses some consolatory words to him, for he pities the man; and then, since nothing can be done, takes horse and rides back to Lisieux to await events.

Charles VII's forces, admirably disciplined, appear before Lisieux in due course. The town is without defenses, garrisoned only by a hundred English men-at-arms; and the citizens, who fear the vengeance of the English government if they give up their town, turn instinctively in this crisis (the English residents included) to their bishop Thomas, whose strength and prudence they know. He himself has a problem to face: where does his duty lie, in obedience to the English government, to which he took the customary oath on accession to the see, or in safeguarding his flock? Before making up his mind he takes a number of his canons and goes out to meet the French captains—the great Dunois is one of them, Jehan de Brézé another, Robert de Flocques a third—whom he addresses with firmness and courtesy, pointing out that valorous soldiers may find elsewhere something more worthy of attack than a town like Lisieux, which is entirely defenseless and, moreover, is the patrimony of God and St. Peter.

The French captains reply that their duty and intention is to take Lisieux, and Basin's dilemma is thus resolved. But with scrupulous conscience he retires to his town and calls an urgent council of the nobles, clergy, and citizens. Their unanimous decision is to give up Lisieux to the French, and Basin, joyful at this issue (for apart from his duty he has little love for the English himself) is given charge, by another unanimous vote, of the drawing up of the articles of surrender. This document is a model of its kind. Both sides, ruled by him, display the utmost consideration, moderation and humanity: and the name of Thomas Basin, like the name of Cardinal Manning after the London dock strike settlement of 1889 and the name of Cardinal de Cabrières after the vineyard upheavals in the Midi in 1907, and the great and shining name of Cardinal Mercier after the late European war, is everywhere repeated with respect and admiration. On the entry of the French troops into Lisieux he receives them and leads them to the cathedral, and the same day the French captains show their esteem for his quality by inviting him into their council. Basin has once more unswervingly made up his mind. His duty lies henceforth with his countrymen against the foreigner.

Charles VII is now approaching from the south, and Basin sets out to meet him, is received with kindness, takes the oath of fidelity, and is appointed a royal councilor; and the bishop accompanies Charles in his advance to Rouen, receiving him as he enters the town by the Porte Beauvaisine in the full vesture of episcopal dignity, cope and mitre, crozier, gloves, and amethyst ring, offering congratulations and presenting to the King of France all the bishops of Normandy; after which he retires to his diocese and takes up his pastoral work again, alleviating his leisure with the composition of two works of jurisprudence.

The *procès de réhabilitation* of St. Joan, which Charles VII immediately ordered, was not only a tribute of national gratitude and a necessity in common justice but a blow at the English. The most learned canonists in France were entrusted with the examination of the *dossier* of the Maid's trial; among their number was Thomas Basin. Since the Maid had been tried for heresy, a Papal bull was necessary to challenge the sentence, and after four years of correspondence, embassies, and preliminary sifting of the evidence the bull was granted. The whole *dossier* was then passed item by item through the sieve with care and patience by the consistorial lawyers, aided by the first jurisconsults in Italy and the first lawyers in France, and the machinations of Cauchon and the injustice of the verdict amply shown to the world. A weighty memoir, a treasure of dry, logical, forensic science drawn up on the subject by Thomas Basin and proving the nullity of the trial, figures among the official documents of the process (1453).

In 1455 Basin's expert legal opinion is sought once more, this time by the royal commission appointed by Charles to reform the whole system of the judicial procedure; and once more, his orderly mind delighting in such things, Basin draws up a treatise, comparing with the overlapping, interminable delays, unspeakable confusion, tangled procedure, and consequent odious abuses of the French system the calm efficiency and dignity of the Roman Rota, which wastes neither time nor words and decides more causes in a day than the Parliament of Paris does in a month. The conclusion is not without a gleam of quiet humor. Basin, strongly recommending the adoption of the Rota system in France, admits that the national passion for oratory is against it: *"sed difficile atque durum erit valde nostrates a placitationis verbalis pompa divellere"* (it will be extremely difficult to wean our people from the delights of verbosity).

§ 2

And now, with the entry of the Dauphin Louis on the political scene, the troubles of Thomas Basin begin. It is not necessary to go in detail into the intrigue of 1449. Louis, who already has Dauphiny, wants Normandy, and despatches confidential emissaries to prominent Normans with intent to bring about a movement in his favor in the States of Normandy, on the ground that so valuable and disputed an appanage of the Crown should be administered by the heir to the Crown. Among those Normans on whom Louis counts to help his intrigue is Thomas Basin; and he is so confident of the bishop's assistance that he commits himself, with promises of rich rewards, to writing. Basin, an honest man, does his duty to his King by sending on these letters to Charles VII, with the names involved. Charles, angered at the plot, announces it to the Council, and Louis' spies at once carry back the news that all is discovered. It is not healthy to attempt to thwart Louis. Exile improves the memory.

On the eve of Louis' coronation in August, 1461, Basin, who has already a broad idea of his position, goes calmly to Rheims to pay his allegiance to the new King and await whatever may be in store for him. Louis dissembles his hate, receives him with smiles, and accords him the honor of an invitation to take part in the ceremony of the *sacre,* which gives those prelates partaking a relationship of spiritual paternity to the Crown; and the day after the coronation, at St. Thierry, the King listens with extreme modesty to an address by Basin on the miseries of the kingdom and means of ending them. When the address is over Louis is overcome with gratitude, showers thanks and flattery on the orator, confesses his inexperience and eagerness to profit by such advice, and begs the Bishop to reflect further on this grave matter and indicate the remedy more fully. And Basin, completely deceived by these fair words—for he is an honest man—retires to Paris to compose another treatise.

The impression made on Basin by his new King is not favorable, and his hopes for France are quickly dashed. Basin is a sober, dogged conservative, and if the King's carelessness of manner, free jesting, and shabbiness shock his sense of propriety, he is more deeply repelled by Louis' behavior to his father, the dismissal of Charles VII's best officers from Court, and Louis' order a little later to the clergy and religious Orders to declare their property and incomes to him. To Basin (and he exists today) such things are a proof that France is going fast downhill to the ultimate dogs. In later years this dislike, crystallized into strong hatred, will produce that portrait of Louis in Basin's history, etched in the sharpest acid, which is famous: a portrait in the manner of Suetonius, holding up to the execration of posterity the tyrant, the monster of vice, a criminal son and an evil King; in his manner a buffoon, in his dress a beggar, in his talk a tiresome babbler, extravagant, rude, undignified, unscrupulous, grotesque, unbalanced, devoid of courage, cruel, a drunkard, an assassin, a Nero, a Domitian, a Tiberius, a Sulla. The picture of Louis is the only portion of Basin's historical work which is inaccurate. It will soon be perceived what provocation inspired it.

In 1464, on the death of Pius II, Louis XI determined to restore, with certain reservations, the Pragmatic Sanction which Balue had induced him to abrogate in 1461. Thomas Basin, probably the foremost authority on jurisprudence and canon law in the kingdom, supported Louis, for his sympathies were Gallican and he was Charles VII's man; his opinions were dictated not by any latent opposition to the Holy See but by devotion to the Church's dignity in France and a creditable feeling for those priests, worthy and lettered, toiling in obscure benefices without hope of ever coming to preferment, for which their worldly betters intrigued over their heads. He therefore wrote a treatise on this subject in lucid and vigorous French, in which his enthusiasm suggested to him a thoroughly bad argument, namely, that Louis' abrogation of the Pragmatic had been an engagement with Pius II *personally,* and did not bind him with Pius' successor. There can be no question about this argument: it is a good man's single slip, and Louis eagerly seized on and exploited it, throwing the responsibility on Basin.

Thus does Louis already allow some of his feelings to emerge. The truce between them will not last long, and Basin's own stiff conservatism and hatred of the odious new government which is dragging the country to ruin will hasten events.

The uprising of the League of the Public Weal comes in 1465, and Basin, though he takes no active part in it, strongly sympathizes with its professed object of reforming the government of France. When the captain of a vessel (says Basin in his Memoirs) persists in steering it on the rocks and stubbornly refuses to listen to the warnings of his crew, his crew should take the helm from him. In addition to this sentiment Basin has to the full the local patriotism which the Normans still have, with the Bretons, the Provençaux, and those of some other provinces. I have heard a square, ruddy Norman priest in a remote village church speaking with such exclusive pride, in his broad Norman tongue, of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, *notre petite sainte normande,* that one might imagine the rest of France to be a foreign country. In the fifteenth century, when Normandy and other provinces were hardly part of France, this patriotism was stronger and more exclusive. It is therefore understandable that Thomas Basin should deem himself entirely justified in handing over his town of Lisieux to the troops of Charles of France, Louis' brother. He has also, on

Charles' entry into Normandy, in accordance with the treaty between Louis XI and the League after the rising, placed on Charles' finger in Rouen Cathedral the symbolic gold ring wedding the Duke of Normandy to his Duchy.[2] These are two black marks against Basin in Louis' private register, and serious ones. The Bishop has now delivered himself to his royal enemy, and Louis will take vengeance for the "betrayal" of 1449 as well.

The blow falls rapidly, in Louis' manner. On a slim pretext of assistance, as we have already seen, Louis despatches troops into Normandy. Like a flash they occupy Caen, Séez, and Carentan. The Duke of Bourbon already holds Evreux for the King.[3] The young Duke Charles, deserted and threatened with seizure, turns to his faithful Basin, who rides post with two other trusted knights to seek Burgundy, the only friend capable of help Charles has left. They find Charolais mounting his horse for a military expedition against Dinant, but Philip the Good receives them with the courtesy of the great gentleman he is; but he is too old to grasp the position, and after three weeks' unprofitable conversation Basin learns that the worst has happened. Charles, Duke of Normandy, has fled to Brittany, and Louis XI, now master of Normandy, is pitilessly pursuing the remnants of Charles' supporters. From a friend Basin receives with the news a few packages of books and clothing: they are what remains of the sack, by Louis' order, of his episcopal palace. His temporal power has been given to the Cadet d'Albret.

Devoutly thanking God for his escape, Thomas Basin resigns himself to remaining at Louvain. *Impavidum ferient ruinæ.* He has preserved his conscience and liberty, and has nothing to regret. Years later in his *Apologia* he will steadfastly reaffirm his belief in his cause and his consolation in Almighty God. Meanwhile at Louvain he is surrounded with affection and honor by the University and the clergy, and Burgundy invites him to consecrate Louis of Bourbon Bishop of Liége.

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[2] This ring was ceremonially broken on an anvil, in the presence of the notables of Normandy, by Louis' order in 1469, after his reconciliation with Charles.

[3] Bourbon, being absent, had been left out of the treaty of Conflans by his friends of the League, and greatly resented it. Louis had little difficulty in winning him over immediately with promises of better things.

But now Louis is reconsidering his impulsive drive and repenting his violence against a man of merit who may prove invaluable to his greatest rival. He proclaims amnesties, general and personal, pardons Basin's brother Michael, and tries by many indirect means to persuade Basin to return. The bishop prudently hesitates; but when his friends inform him of the wreck of his see he answers the call of duty and crosses the border. Immediately Louis' spies are dogging him; he is shadowed everywhere; at Rouen he receives an order to go at once to the King at Orleans by unfrequented roads, avoiding large towns; and so, having been permitted to stay in Rouen only one night between dusk and dawn, he sets out on the road to Orleans.

The long persecution has begun, heralded by the preliminary spying and the insulting regulations for the journey. Louis, who has successfully detached Basin from Burgundy, is now about to break his spirit. While Basin is waiting to be presented to him at Orleans Louis enters the room, surveys him from head to foot, salutes him icily, and goes out by another door. For the next few days the King is invisible. Basin, in deep perplexity, ill-advisedly seeks the help of Jehan Balue, offers him presents, begs him to speak to the King; and the cynical Balue takes the gifts and arranges with Louis next day that Basin shall be sent south to Perpignan in the Roussillon, where the climate is considered deadly to the French. Basin, having mildly asked inſtead for some obscure charge in Auvergne or Dauphiny and been refused, bows his head and accepts the chancellery of the Rousillon, and after following the Court to Bourges and then to Tours is brutally given his *congé* in a letter from Louis to the Chancellor, who delivers it to Basin with tears in his eyes. Basin mounts his mule, which he has only juſt left at the door, and begins his long journey.

The summer in Perpignan is terrible, and an epidemic sweeps away fifteen hundred people; and though Basin's Norman conſtitution withſtands it, he does not escape without an internal malady. But he ſticks to his work, wins the respect and affection of the Catalans, who gaze wide-eyed at a functionary who does not make up his inadequate pay by bribery, embezzlement, or coercion, and in February 1468 receives three royal orders brusquely recalling him. Immediately afterwards an express despatch orders him to go as envoy to the Duke of Calabria in Catalonia, and Basin makes the journey to Barcelona, enduring every kind of peril and privation, only to find, on his return to Perpignan after this affair, that his recall to the north is revoked.

This time the ſturdy Norman, the undaunted spirit, is brought very near despair. He confesses in his memoir that he nearly died, if a man can so die, of misery and anguish that night.

The Viceroy of the Roussillon advises him ſtrongly to return as if he had received no counter-order, and Basin, setting out north through Languedoc, hears on the road that his royal persecutor has handed over his see of Lisieux to his enemies and that an agent of Louis' is on his way to find him. He debates no more, but takes horse and gallops over the frontier into Savoy, where Yolande, Duchess of Savoy, welcomes him both for himself and to display her independence. Here, at Geneva, the messenger finds him and hands him a brief and violent letter from Louis. Basin replies that he is willing to remain in exile during the King's pleasure. A little time later he is proclaimed by Louis a seditious traitor, and his two brothers are thrown into prison.

The unfortunate bishop retires to Bâle to study and seclusion, and before long a fresh blow falls. His bitterest enemies, a family of wild and evil men named De Manoury, whose lands adjoin Lisieux, hold the temporalities of the see by Louis' favor. In their rage to oust Basin from the spiritual power and make the see wholly theirs, they attempt to implicate him, without a shred of evidence, in the Balue affair. Louis looks on with tight mouth and approves. To Burgundy, who tries to soften him towards Basin, he answers that he will never pardon a rebel who has conspired for his death: a monstrous calumny.

Not only Burgundy, but Charles of France, now reconciled to Louis, pleads strongly in the bishop's favor. "Since this man" replies Louis to his brother at length, "is as meritorious as you say, I am agreeable to his being given the expectation of the first vacant see in Guyenne or the district, and it can be a see producing as much as, or more than, the income of his present one. But I will never suffer his return to Lisieux." And a little later the implacable Louis replies to another friend of Basin's who has tried to move him that if he held the Bishop of Lisieux in his hands he would make such an example of him that the whole world would shudder.

All this time Louis is indefatigably endeavoring to eject Basin from his see, bombarding the Court of Rome with complaints, demands, and denunciations. But neither Paul II nor Sixtus IV, who know the truth, will gratify his hatred. Louis is forced therefore to resume his original method of wearing down the man and crushing him by steady application. It is made a criminal offense to convey to Basin, who has now removed to Ghent, any dues from his see, and some faithful merchants of his country who have been bringing money at intervals to the fair of Antwerp for their bishop are shadowed, threatened with punishment for treason, and bullied into obedience. Basin's two brothers, who after their release have been endeavoring to administer what is left of his affairs, are again imprisoned in the Châtelet at Paris, roughly examined in the question-chamber, and forced to hand over some 4000 florins of Basin's estate; and their persons and property are declared confiscate.

At this last stroke Basin, who has now moved to Treves on the Rhine, can bear this life no longer. His see is devastated by Louis' vultures, his diocese ravaged, his flock abandoned, his brothers in peril, and he himself cut off from all correspondence and the means to live. He resigns his see of Lisieux in May, 1474, and Sixtus IV, who has urged him in vain to be patient a little longer, creates him Archbishop of Cæsarea in Palestine. Enough of the revenues of Lisieux to live upon are secured to him by arrangement, and Louis, overjoyed at attaining his ends after so long, allows the 4000 florins extracted from his brothers to be returned to him, entering them in the accounts as a State debt.

For three years Basin, now over sixty years old, rests at Treves in quiet and retirement, in the congenial company of scholars and men of letters, meditating, helping to found the University of Treves, beginning to compile his Latin chronicle of the reigns of Charles VII and Louis, publishing meanwhile his *Apologia,* his defense against his persecutor. This book once published, he has burned his boats, and can never return to France. In 1475 he goes back to Louvain, and at the death of Charles the Rash and the French advance two years later hastens into Holland, where David, Bishop of Utrecht, receives him gladly and with honor, appointing him his coadjutor. But Louis' agents stir up trouble in Utrecht and Basin is forced to fly to Breda for a year, returning then to Utrecht, where he builds himself a modest but comfortable house to console his declining years after so much bitterness: for his enemy Louis is now dead, Europe is at peace, and he can devote himself to the continuation of his history.

This continuation is notable. Basin's old predilection for the House of Burgundy, which treated him with such kindness in his exile, has undergone a sharp change since the reckless and furious performances of Charles the Rash. Basin therefore with regretful honesty takes down Burgundy from the pedestal and admits the stains and the feet of clay; but, characteristically, he lays the blame on Louis, who has spoiled his hero.[4]

So, in writing, study, and meditation, his last years slip by in peace, and one or two pamphlets demonstrate his still youthful vigor. In December, 1491, he dies, aged eighty, and is buried in St. John's Church in Utrecht, with a copper plaque, engraved with his portrait, on his tomb. Both are defaced by Calvinists in due course.

This honorable, gifted, dogged, prejudiced, and most unfortunate man had the defects of his qualities. The black hatred with which he blasts Louis' name and achievements is easily understood. That part of his history which concerns the reign of Charles VII and things seen and experienced is solid, accurate, and free from prejudice, and he has sympathy and indignation for the misery of the poor. But he is handicapped politically by being what is today called a Tory of the Old School; he is a last-ditcher of the Feudal System, to which, in the words of M. Quicherat, his editor, "he attached himself as to the anchor of salvation, vowing enmity to any who should lay a hand on it." He believed in individual independence and the rights of property, like Tennyson's farmer. His clash with Louis was inevitable, and he was sincere in his changeless loathing of Louis' politics.

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[4] The manuscript of Basin's history bore no author's name, and until 1855, when M. Quicherat's research revealed its proper attribution, was generally accepted as the work of a priest named Amelgard, of Liége.

During his harassed and embittered life he was forced to fly for safety fifteen times. May he have long since found rest, refreshment, and light perpetual, for he was a good man and suffered greatly.

3

FRIAR OLIVIER MAILLARD

§ 1

But the most vivid figure in the Church in France during the reign of Louis XI is no prelate but a simple friar of the Franciscan Order, Olivier Maillard. The roll of the Franciscans is full of master personalities of many varying types from St. Bonaventure and Duns Scotus to Roger Bacon, to whom at the present moment Science is reluctantly giving some of his due; and it may be noted likewise, in passing, that the Third Order of St. Francis—the confraternity of layfolk attached to the Rule but living in the world—has enrolled some of the most notable figures of every age, from St. Louis, King of France, and Dante in the thirteenth century to Galvani, Father of Electricity, in the eighteenth, Liszt, the musician, in the nineteenth, and Hugo von Hoffmannsthal, the Viennese dramatist, who was buried in the habit of the Third Order in this year 1929; with these, as Mr. G. K. Chesterton has observed, "all sorts of great names from the most recent and rationalistic centuries." The courage and independence of Olivier Maillard certainly entitle him to an honorable place in his Order's annals. There is a celebrated occasion on which one of his more biting pulpit addresses grievously offended Louis XI. In due course the friar was approached by a royal emissary, who spoke briefly of punishment by drowning in a sack in the Seine. Maillard, completely undismayed, gave him a short message for his Majesty. "Tell him I shall arrive in Paradise sooner by water than he will with all his post-horses." [1]

This is, so far as can be discovered, the only occasion on which Louis XI and Olivier Maillard, a great part of whose long and arduous life was spent under Louis' reign, came into contact; and the incident,[2] it is reported, gave great pleasure to the Parisian populace, who, *frondeur* by nature and traditionally attached to the Franciscans, repeated it everywhere with sardonic comments adverse to the King. It may be noted, before proceeding, that Louis did not venture to take the step with Maillard which he took with another daring friar, Fradin, in 1478. To this preacher he sent Olivier le Daim with threats and peremptory orders to shut his mouth, whereupon the people of Paris rose to protect the friar against the King, volunteer guards of citizens kept the doors of the Cordeliers' convent where he had taken refuge, and on his final banishment from Paris large crowds followed him for miles outside the city, weeping and comforting him. Why Louis did not deal with Maillard in the same way affords pleasing matter for conjecture.

It is a habit of writers on historical subjects who are content to repeat *cliché* to dismiss Olivier Maillard in a few words as a buffoon, relying chiefly on a manuscript sermon of his in which, immediately after the introductory passages and in two or three other places, comes a space with the words

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[1] Louis had recently established his postal courier system throughout France (June 1464).

[2] It was turned into verse by the German Sebastian Brandt in 1505 and included in his huge satire *The Ship of Fools.* The quatrain runs, in jogtrot Latin:

Quidam notus homo, cum propter libera verba
Submergendum undis censeret rex metuendus,
Sic ait hoc regi: Per aquas maturius altos
Advehar ad coelos, per equos ac ipse volantes!

Hem. Hem. Hem.

This mild eccentricity, which has a quite reasonable explanation, namely that each *hem, hem, hem,* marks the end of one complete section of a long sermon and enables the preacher to pause a moment before proceeding, while his congregation may cough if so inclined, has sufficed in the opinion of such persons (Voltaire included), to prove Maillard a *cabotin* and a mountebank, and beyond that, nothing. Yet this was a man of quality; a doctor of the University of Paris whose pure austerity of life and erudition drew a compliment from Innocent VIII; who for forty-four years preached incessantly, almost daily, up and down Europe, in France, Flanders, Spain, England, Hungary, and Germany; who was confessor to Charles VIII and was entrusted with two delicate diplomatic missions; who mixed in his preaching scholastic gravity and the raciest Gallic salt; who, finally, feared no man and spared no abuse, and to whose apostolic fervor a contemporary, Nicolas Bertrand of Toulouse, has borne witness: "Such was the *éclat* of his virtue, such the profundity of his doctrine and the satiric and mordant vivacity of his eloquence, that at his preaching women renounced their lightness and brazen dress, soldiers their disorderly life, and libertines their pleasures, and students (I have seen this) returned to their religion. Evil communication could not stand before the power of his logic and the vigor of his arguments."

If any further testimony to Olivier Maillard's character is needed it is found in the annals of his Order, in which he was five times French Provincial and three times Vicar-General *ultramontanus,* ruling all the Franciscan houses of France, England, Germany, and Spain. In the Franciscan rolls he is styled "Blessed," though the Church has never raised him to beatification. He was undoubtedly a saint, a reformer both religious and social, a fiery champion of the poor and oppressed; and yet his impulsiveness—he was a Breton—was tempered with such tact that he could carry to a successful conclusion such a piece of diplomatic negotiation as prevailing on Charles VIII to return to Ferdinand of Aragon the provinces of the Roussillon and the Cerdagne, which the skinflint Louis XI had held in his usurer's grip for thirty years.

His long life was spent in fighting. He attacked every base thing: the oppression of the poor by the rich, the fraud of merchants and tradesmen, the dirty trade of usury, the simony and luxury of high ecclesiastics, the vulgar ostentation of *nouveaux riches,* the flaunting license of women's dress, the loose morals of the University (masters and students alike), the pestilent crookedness of lawyers, the venality of judges. On one famous occasion, though the foundation of all his teaching was loyalty to the King and Mother Church and obedience to Christ's Vicar, he indignantly protested from the pulpit against a rank affair in which Louis XII, Alexander VI, and their judicial officials were equally involved: the annulment of Louis' marriage of policy to Jehanne de Valois, his cousin, the plain, humpbacked daughter of Louis XI, who had ordered the marriage. Louis XII wished to be free to marry Anne of Brittany and so to keep her rich province in the possession of the Crown. Alexander VI, the worst Pope in history, favored him, and the mild Jehanne, after the humiliations of the annulment proceedings, retired to Bourges to found the order of the *Annonciades* and to end her saintly life in the cloister. Maillard went into temporary exile.

§ 2

His preaching is solidly based on the scholastic form common to his age; first comes the *prothema,* or paraphrase of his Scriptural text, next the *quæstio,* or theme in theology or canon law pertaining, next the example, or parable; these three forming the preamble: and thence he proceeds to the sermon proper, divided into two sections, the exposition of the Gospel (*sancti Evangelii expositiva*), and the development of the moral with the peroration. But he could be sardonically gay—as in a sermon at Carnival-time, when he addressed the rows of complacent shining faces before him:

"Aha, are you there, my roisterers, who indulge yourselves so sweetly about this time, stuffing your paunches for the love of God?"

And again, addressing a brilliant gathering of Knights of the Golden Fleece:

"You, Knights, take the oaths pertaining to your Order—oaths which are solemn, as I believe; but you preface these with another oath which you keep much better, namely that you will carry out nothing you swear."

On another occasion, preaching on the Last Judgment in his old age at Toulouse, this friar and eccentric saint bursts into song, to a pastoral air of Savoy:

Bonnets rouges et chapeaux blancs,
Ribleurs et batteurs de pavé,
Vous mourrez tous, pour parler franc,
Et serez damnés ou sauvés:
Maillard vous a très bien lavés.[3]

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[3] Or the last line might carry the slang sense of *laver la tête à quelqu'un:* "Maillard has given you a pretty good blowing-up!" The few poems of Maillard's still preserved are ballades and *chants-royaux,* more remarkable for religious merit than literary. One cannot have everything.

[Bonnets red and bonnets white,
Blades who riot and drink and yell,
You will die some day, or night,
And go hence to Heaven or Hell:
Maillard's washed you pretty well!]

Often he will rally his hearers ironically; thus, after citing a text from the prophet Zacharias in Latin: "There's a fine prophecy! Those of you, *Messieurs et Mesdames,* who happen to possess a Bible in French, find out what Zacharias means by these words." And he will apologize after citing a string of texts together: *"Mesdames,* you will possibly raise the objection among yourselves that you have not learned Latin. But patience! I am going to translate!" He is severe on the fifteenth-century coquette, with her peacocking and her *minauderies,* her starving herself for a slim figure (though she will excuse herself from observing the Church's fasts, because they make her head ache), her extravagant dress, with its liberal exposure of the body, her jewels, and perfumes, and paint, and the absurd high headdress, the *hennin,* which stirred other preachers of the age to sarcasm and denunciation —Friar Thomas Couette, for example, who would assemble little derisive gangs of boys to follow the wearers and shout them to scorn, and the English priest-poet John Lydgate, who wrote a poem on the subject, in which poem he shows plainly that the "horns" of women's headdress show forth not only folly but brazen flaunting pride.

Greatest of virtues is humility
As Solomon saith, son of sapience,
Most was accept unto the Deity;
Take heed hereof, give to his words credence.

How Maria, which had a preëminence
Above all women, in Bedlem when she lay
At Christes birth: no cloth of great dispense,
She weared a coverchief: horns were cast away . . .

Olivier Maillard has nothing but terse contempt also for the fashionable woman who shirks motherhood:

> St. Bernard's mother was a countess. She had six children and brought them all up herself at the breaſt.

and for the tattler:

> In Spain everyone carries a dagger or a sword for attack or defense. You, my ladies, have no need of any blade: you possess a tongue which does as much harm as any poignard.

From his sermons and others of his time it is possible to construct a full-length Hogarthian portrait of the frivolous lady of fashion in that turbulent and disorderly century. She rises late from bed and spends a couple of hours at her mirror, decking and painting herself. Her gowns are coſtly, trimmed with Lombard furs and marten and ſtuffed out behind with a "cushion." Her tunic is of rich colored silk or velvet. Her sleeves are either so narrow that she can hardly thruſt her arms through them, or so long and wide that they sweep the ground like wings. On her head is the towering *hennin,* and behind her, crowning absurdity, is a long train dragging the ground. Around her neck are gold chains and jewels. So attired, with her bosom exposed to the admiration of ſtreet loungers or provocatively veiled in transparent lawn, she sweeps to church, fingering a large rosary of heavy gold beads, with a servant behind her to carry her richly bound and illuminated Book of Hours. She attends the lateſt possible Mass as if it were a favor to Almighty God, preening and prinking and caſting sidelong glances and exchanging signs and conversation in the church itself, or ſtudying her Book of Hours in an advantageous pose,—in which prayer-book the pages she reads moſt assiduously contain a note from her lover, *"voſtre loyal, voſtre mignon, voſtre serviteur,* *vostre très tout," etc.* One of these butterflies figures in one of Maillard's most dramatic parables. She is a fashionable beauty of Vendôme, who begs her confessor, who is setting out for Paris, to bring her back from town a handsome mirror. The monk reaches Paris, and, going to the Innocents cemetery, there procures the skull of a famous beauty long dead. This he wraps carefully in a silk napkin, and returns to Vendôme, requiring the lady to summon all her friends to admire the mirror she asked for. They assemble, and the monk unwraps his grim present and gives it to her in their presence; on which she swoons away. "Collect yourself," says the confessor calmly. "This once belonged to a great beauty of Paris of whom you have heard. She was fairer than you, and one day you will resemble her as she is now." And the coquette, her eyes opened at last to the empty follies of the world, gives them up and retires into religion.

It must nevertheless not be imagined that sustained denunciation is the single note of Maillard's five hundred sermons. He can be gentle, he can cajole and plead, he can display a sudden passion of appeal. "O sinner," he cries in one place, "O sinner, wretched creature, degenerate son, thou hast before thine eyes the gibbet on which hangs thy Father and thy Master: and thou canst but laugh, and jest, and hasten on to the banquet of thirty thousand devils!" (*"O pecheur, mechant varlet, fils degeneré, tu as devant tes yeux le gibet où pend ton Père et ton Maistre: et tu ris, et tu plaisantes, et tu voys ès banquetz de trente mille dyables!"*) Had Friar John of the Flails in *Pantagruel* returned to the obedience of his Rule, had the Abbey of Thélème possessed a church, this is the authentic kind of apostrophe he might have boomed at his auditory in his great bull-voice. The reputation of Olivier Maillard, indeed, still flourished in Rabelais' time: does not

Panurge, when he is causing the sheep-merchant Dingdong and his company to be drowned, preach to them from the ship's gunwale "all the while like any little Fryar Maillard"?

Side by side in Maillard's sermons with his attacks on tyranny against the poor, whether it is exercised by nobles, or lawyers (those *"écorcheurs du peuple,"* flayers of the people), or by the petty frauds and larceny of butchers and vintners and bakers and apothecaries and speculators in food, and usurers and fortune-tellers, are his attacks on those of his own calling who bring scandal on the Church. It has already been observed in this book that the system of high lay patronage had opened the door to enormous abuses, and that by the favor of princes and politicians places in the Church fell into the hands of men who remained laymen, who had no religious vocation, who degraded their office with ostentatious luxury and license. To such as these Olivier Maillard would address himself in the middle of an Advent sermon, turning suddenly in the pulpit towards certain ecclesiastics in the choir: "Consider whether Saint Stephen led the life you lead! Consider whether he spent, as you do, the goods of Holy Church and the Crucified on courtesans and actors, nourishing these bitches (*chiennes*) and birds of prey with the property of God's poor!" But there is this essential difference between Maillard and the reformers whose projects were later developed in the taverns of Germany, that while he hated ecclesiastical abuses as much as they, and was as fiery an apostle of reform, he remained a devout and slashing champion of the Faith, which is above these things: in the phrase of a modern writer, he clearly saw the cobwebs and the fissures, but he was not one of those who would remedy such evils by pulling down the majestic Fabric which they disfigured. In another Lenten sermon he issues a call to the laity. “Layfolk, pray for the Church, that God may make these scandals to cease; and if there are disorders among us in every state and degree, let us correct ourselves and amend our lives—but let us honor Holy Church.” Again, he pours huge scorn on the contemporary fashionable addiction to distant pilgrimages, with their opportunities for travel, and agreeable promiscuities, and worldly bustle. Such *esbatemens,* he cries, cannot take the place of plain religious duty. In such things this friar is not expressing an isolated opinion. He had on his side every devout soul in Christendom.

§ 3

One may hear the authentic voice of Friar Olivier Maillard by placing oneself in imagination among the congregation in Bruges Cathedral at the Mass of Passion Sunday, 1500. The huge nave is crowded. On a dais hung with curtains, surrounded by the Knights of the Golden Fleece, sits Prince Philippe le Beau, Archduke of Austria, son of the Emperor Maximilian and Marie of Burgundy, with his wife Juana, Infanta of Spain, and his sister, Margaret of Austria. The Gospel of the day over, the spare figure of Olivier Maillard, then in his seventieth year but still vigorous after a lifetime of ceaseless apostolate, ascends the pulpit in his dun-colored habit with the rope girdle. The still strong voice, having invoked the Trinity and announced the text, from the Book of Joshua describing the fall of Jericho, begins the sermon. The language is plain, the style terse and graphic. “The smallest hole,” cries the preacher, “can sink the tallest ship that sails the seas! Through the tiniest false postern the strongest city, the strongest castle in the world can be taken! One little open window can ruin the finest merchant's shop in Bruges! Alas, sinners, since by one defection we give way to all, what of those of you who transgress so much every day?"

He turns suddenly towards the august group on the dais:

"Where shall I begin? With those between the curtains? With the Prince, and *la Sua Altese* the Princess? I assure you, Monseigneur, that personal goodness is not enough. You must be a good *prince,* administer justice, see to it that your subjects walk aright. And you, Madame—it is not sufficient for you, likewise, to be merely a good woman. You must rule your family, in truth and reason. And I say as much to all others of the same Estate."

It is the turn of the haughty Knights of the Fleece, in their silks and jewels and velvet. The quip concerning their oath I have already quoted. And Friar Maillard turns again and makes a swoop:

"Are you there, Gentlemen of the Household—officers of the Pantry, the Fruitery, and the Cellars? And the Treasurers? Aha!—and you, Gentlemen of the Plate, are you there too, you who so well serve your master and yourselves? Listen, friends! Half a word to the wise . . . ! And you, ladies of the Court, young beauties! Leave off these adventures! —there must be no argument about it. And you, sir, my young ruffling blade there, in the red bonnet! No more of those sheep's-eyes! No, this is nothing to laugh about!" The passage is even racier in the original: *"Où sont les Tresoriers? Ha, les Argentiers, estes vous là, qui faictes les besoignes de vostre maistre, et les vostres bien? Acoustez, à bon entendeur il ne fault que demi-mot! Les dames de la Court, jeunes garches, illecques il fault laisser voz aliances, il n'y a ne sy* *ne qua! Jeune gaudisseur, bonnet rouge! il fault laisser voz regardz! Il n'y a de quoy rire, non!"* And the preacher proceeds:

"Well, what have you to say, my Lords? Are you on the side of God? Are you, Prince, and you, Princess? Hang your heads! And you others, you magnates in fur (*gros fourrez*), are you? Hang your heads! And you, Knights of the Fleece, are you? Hang your heads! And you, gentlemen, and you, my young blades? Hang your heads! And you, ladies, my beauties of the Court? Hang your heads!"

He drops familiarities therewith and becomes earneſt and Scriptural. As has already been observed, he is not, in spite of his personal attacks, a fabricator of cheap-jack harangues, but his homilies are solidly composed, logically and skillfully developed, and ſtuffed full of Holy Writ. At length he comes to his peroration:

"In my laſt sermon, as I took leave of you, I told you, gentlemen, that silver or gold had I none to give you; but I will bequeath you what I can: to Monseigneur and Madame magnanimity and ſtability, to the widowed lady their siſter patience and humility (for Almighty God has visited her), to my Lords of the Golden Fleece juſtice and equity, to the gentlemen of the Household honeſt conversation, to the ladies honor and modeſty, to those of them who are married honorable love and happiness, to the officers good faith and loyalty, to the merchants and burgesses honeſty in their dealings. Meditate on this, and Almighty God assiſt you in it with His grace. One *Pater Noſter* and an *Ave Maria,* and one *Ave* for my intention."

And Friar Olivier Maillard turns and descends the pulpit and cleaves his way out through the crowd to the sacriſty, while the chaunt of the Creed begins at the high altar. This fragment of one of his addresses gives a few of his moſt prominent characteristics; his verve, his directness, his entire lack of awe for those in high places. He can be profound, and again he can freely adapt the form of the popular misteries and, as it were, stage the Scriptural drama in monologue before his audience, with considerable ability. Yet his fame was not merely oratorical, and his years of preaching and traveling reaped large numbers of conversions, as at Angers, at Orleans, and elsewhere in France and in Europe. On the refined ears of a later age (and one may imagine with what disdain and booming Dr. Johnson, that connoisseur, who so pontifically discriminated between the styles of Atterbury, Tillotson, South, Sherlock, and other maſters of the pulpit of the Age of Decorum, would have dismissed Maillard) his freedoms may jar. The criticisms directed by the genteel againſt the pulpit manner of Father Bernard Vaughan, the Olivier Maillard of twentieth-century London (and like Maillard a maſter personality) are ſtill fresh in the memory. It is all very regrettable. As the Superior Person says in the ballade:

In all our thoughts, in all our ways,
In all our doings, O God benign,
In all the tumult of our days,
In health and sickness, rain or shine;
On land, or on the heaving brine,
Awake, asleep, by hill or glen,
At Morning Tea, and when we Dine,
Let us at leaſt be Gentlemen.

Maillard died at Toulouse in 1502, at the age of about seventy-two, ſtill active in harness, ſtill garbed in the coarse dun habit of a simple friar of the Strict Observance of the Franciscan Order. He was buried in the church of the Franciscan convent there, and there was some contemporary talk of miracles at his tomb. All trace of his burial-place has vanished.

Y todas las cosas se pasan.
Las memorias se acaban.
Las lenguas se cansan.

IX

THREE ARTISTS

1. Jehan Van Ockeghem, Musician
2. Arnoul Gréban, Dramatist
3. François Villon, Poet

I

JEHAN VAN OCKEGHEM, MUSICIAN

§ 1

About the year 1477 the Florentine Francesco Florio wrote a long letter in Latin from Tours to his friend Jacobus Tarlatus in Rome describing the excellence of the chief city of Touraine, the Garden of France. The good Florio, whose own lovely city might have inoculated him against enthusiasms for foreign things, is not so much appreciative as lyrical. Everything in Tours is superb, from the local pear called *Bon-Chrétien* to the splendors of the Basilica of St. Martin; but he becomes dithyrambic on visiting the Chapel Royal in the Château. Here Mass and Vespers are sung daily by the finest singers in France, above whose voices the golden voice of the royal *maistre de chapelle,* Jehan de Ockeghem, soars supreme in beauty and skill, as Calliope by the favor of Apollo soars above the daughters of the Pierides. "Here," exclaims Florio, "is the only faultless singer, abounding in every excellence, even as in Arabia one Phoenix alone is worthy of reverence and contemplation! (*ut in Arabia Phoenix merito coli potest et observari*)."

This is no orgy of superlatives on Florio's part alone. The figure of Jehan de Ockeghem stands out from his time in a blaze of gold. If any man in any age may be accounted happy, this musician is that man. His art was acknowledged in his lifetime supreme in Europe, even by brother musicians. He wrote music which was performed by the best singers in Europe and accompanied by the most perfect collaboration of the sister arts; architecture, painting, beauty of silverwork and goldwork and vesture, beauty of the Liturgy, beauty of perfumes and ceremony. He was the officer of three successive kings. He was Treasurer of the Basilica of St. Martin, one of the master shrines of the world. He was handsome in face and of a shining gravity and grace in word and deed. "*Virum hunc profecto non posses non amare,*" says Florio, "*tanta corporis pulchritudine pollet, tanta morum ac verborum gravitate nitet et gratia.*" (You cannot help loving this man, to be sure, so rich he is in personal beauty, so shining in the grace and gravity of his deeds and words.) And to his grace of personality he added a fine kindness and generosity, as the poet Guillaume Crétin, the Raminagrobis of Rabelais, records:

> *Luy vif pour voir a vuidé ses mains*
> *A ses germains indigens et humains,*
> *L'ung plus, l'ung moins, tous ses biens a fait prendre.*
>
> [Quick to observe, he emptied his purse for those of his fellows who were in poverty. To some he gave more, to others less; he gave away everything he possessed.]

I confess that to summon up the figure of this old musician from the host of turbulent ambitious great men of his age gives pleasure like the sudden hearing of a limpid strain of music when the ear is wearied by brawls. It is happily possible to draw a fair full-length of him also. He was a Fleming, born about 1430 near Termonde; his name, correctly spelt, Van Ockeghem. This intractable name emerges under the patient hand of French scribes of his age—the French, that great nation, are perpetually and heavily defeated through the ages by the names of foreigners, as a glimpse of any French newspaper will show—in at least thirty-four different spellings, from Holreghan to Oken.

At this time Flanders was the undisputed music center of Christendom. At the beginning of the fifteenth century the School of Cambrai had dictated the florid, alembicated, subtly-constructed compositions in canon to which the ballades, *chants-royaux, virelays,* and other verses of poets like Machaut had been set. The Netherlands School (so called, though its leaders were chiefly Flemish and North French) developed this polyphony further; but at the time of Ockeghem's birth a movement towards greater simplicity was already beginning.

In 1443 Ockeghem's name is found in the registers of the choir of Antwerp Cathedral, and his musical education begins. It is not known who was his master. Three leading musicians of the age have been suggested—the great Dufay, Canon of Cambrai, Gilles Binchois, *premier chantre* to the Duke of Burgundy, and John Dunstable. Dunstable may be completely ruled out, as being resident in England. Let it be noted in passing that he is acknowledged by his contemporary Jehan Tinctoris, author of two Latin treatises on music, to be the chief of the English school which was "the fountain and source of the new art of Counterpoint." Dunstable's fame was European; his music has been found at Rome, Bologna, and Dijon, his name is mentioned with respect in a manuscript at Seville. It would be hardly necessary to dwell on this but for the fact that so many believe English arts and sciences, nay, English history itself, to have begun with the reign of Elizabeth.

The name of Ockeghem's master is not of overwhelming importance. Any *maistre de chapelle* of Flanders at that time could have given a musical training of the highest kind. The Flemish masters had no rivals, and no music but theirs was sung throughout civilized Europe.

In 1444 Ockeghem leaves the Cathedral, his voice, as we may presume, having broken. In 1446 we find him a singer in the chapel of Charles Duke of Bourbon. In the Bourbon accounts his name occurs in this year as one of twelve *chantres* for whom thirty-six ells of green cloth were bought to make them gowns. One sees the green-gowned singers of Mgr. de Bourbon filing into the oaken stalls under the high Gothic vaulting, summer and winter, light and dark, every morning for the sung Mass of the household, every evening for Vespers. One hears the golden voice (*aurea vox*) of Ockeghem, which Erasmus after his death praised in a lament:

Ergo non conticuit
Vox illa quondam nobilis
Aurea vox Okegi?

And looming above them one sees the pensive shade, yet unborn, of Palestrina; for Church music in Ockeghem's time was in that condition which called for condemnation by the Councils of Bâle and Trent and a Papal Commission, and finally, a century after Ockeghem, the reforms of Pius IV. It had long been the fashion to base the music of a Mass[1] on secular tunes, and the first phrase of a *Kyrie* might be the theme of a love song or a tavern chorus. Examples of this are common; and yet it is curious that the English school, and particularly the splendid XVIth century Tudor School, whose Masses and motets were rescued from the lumber-room a few years ago by Sir Richard Terry and placed permanently among the Holy Week music at Westminster Cathedral—it is curious that these English composers, Byrd, John Taverner, Christopher Tye, John Shepherd, produced only one or two known Masses of this kind: for example, the famous "Western Wynd." Taverner, Shepherd, and Tye each wrote a superb Mass on the theme of this old song with the longing, beautiful words:

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[1] The principal portions of the Mass which are sung, at a sung or high Mass, are the *Kyrie eleison, Gloria in excelsis, Credo, Sanctus, Benedictus,* and *Agnus Dei.*

> O western Wind, when wilt thou blow
> That the small rain down can rain?

Ockeghem himself wrote Masses called (from their principal theme) *Ma Maistresse, La Belle se siet,* and *L'Homme Armé*—this last a very popular theme used by many late medieval Church musicians, and surprisingly enough by Palestrina himself, who was by no means the furious reformer of the legend. Palestrina's *Missa l'Homme Armé* for five voices, remains, indeed, an enigma by reason of its obscure and involved counterpoint, an essay to the *n*th in what the Holy See was determined to banish in favor of simpler, purer harmonies. His more famous *Missa Papæ Marcelli* reveals the gulf between these and those.

Thus we may hear, in all the Church music of Ockeghem's time, the trebles and tenors singing, perhaps, a regular plainsong theme while the basses are simultaneously booming some less hierarchic setting to the sacred words of the Liturgy. The general plan of such compositions is conveniently enough set forth in the five-part Dirge composed for Ockeghem, after his death, by his pupil Josquin Desprez. This is a cross-section of the opening bars:

Superius: Nymphes des bois, déesses des fontaines,
Changez vos voix fortes claires et haultaines,
En cris tranchanz et lamentations . . .
Contra-Tenor: Nymphes des bois, etc.
Quintus: Nymphes des bois, etc.
Tenor (canon): Requiem æternam dona ei, Domine,
Et lux perpetua luceat ei!
Bass: Nymphes des bois, etc.

It was this jostling of sacred and profane that the reforms of the Holy See designed to abolish, no less than the over-subtle, over-elaborated baroque into which the fugual style and counterpoint had declined.

In 1450 or thereabouts Ockeghem left the Bourbon's service for that of Charles VII, as a composer. On the first of January, 1454, he presented to the King, as a New Year gift, a book of songs; possibly his maiden work. Four years afterwards he is *premier chapelain de chant* (head of the singers). In 1459 he presents the King with *une chançon bien richement enluminée* (a song very richly illuminated), and receives in exchange thirty-three crowns.

In 1461 Charles dispensed *Maistre Jehan de Ockeghem, chapelain de la chapelle roiale,* from perpetual residence in Tours. It was a little before this that he had received the high office which he held from now to his death—the office not only of Master of the Music but of Treasurer of the great Basilica of Saint Martin of Tours, which was in the French Kings' gift as Abbot of Saint Martin since the days of Hugues Capet. The duties of the Treasurer were responsible: he had charge of the gold and silver plate, vestments, jewels, reliquaries, all the riches of this magnificent ancient church, which held the tomb of the soldier-saint and apostle of the Gauls and was second in splendor to none of the Roman basilicas.[2] Nothing remains of this edifice, the third on that site and one of the wonders of Europe. The Huguenots sacked and ruined it in the civil wars of the sixteenth century, the First Empire topped their ambition by sweeping it completely away in favor of a new street. The new basilica in the style of the Fourth Century which has since risen over Saint Martin's Tomb is in its own way remarkable. I do not know whether Ockeghem's music may still be heard there. The revenues of the Treasurer of Saint Martin were considerable: several rich estates and properties were attached to the office, and several of the guilds of Tours paid annual tribute—for example, the butchers, who were bound to bring every year to the Treasurer's house a sheep decked with flowers, and the quarter of an ox.

Charles VII died and Jehan van (or de—for he is henceforth a Frenchman by adoption) Ockeghem, vested in black gown and hood, ordered the music at his funeral. Under Louis XI he became *maistre de la chapelle de chant du Roy,* Master of the King's Chapel, with the additional right to wear perpetually, at the Royal expense, a long gown of fine scarlet cloth furred with gray. His minimum salary, set down in 1471 and onwards, was 360 livres.

That Ockeghem directed the music at Our Lady of Cléry is considered doubtful by Michel Brenet on the ground that there is nowhere mention of it. But Cléry was a Chapel Royal in 1467, and it is difficult to believe that Louis XI, who lavished so much wealth and care on his darling church, would not have ordered his Master of Music to take charge. It seems in any case more than likely that Ockeghem would do so *ex officio.* He certainly directed the Vespers of the Dead and the Vigils following on the night of September 8, 1483, when Louis' body was taken from Plessis to Tours, and the solemn Mass of Requiem next morning. Presumably he did so at the burial at Cléry also.

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[2] Several important state documents were also deposited periodically at the Shrine of Saint Martin, in the Treasurer's keeping.

§ 2

He continued to direct, to compose, to add to his reputation, which flourished long after his death about 1494-6, under Charles VIII. Rabelais brings him into the Prologue of the Fourth Book of *Pantagruel*. "I remember," says Priapus to Jupiter, "that one day of Tubilustre (Horn-Fair), at the Festivals of Goodman Vulcan in May, I heard Josquin des Prez, Olkegan, Hobrethz, Agricola, Brumel——" and a dozen more merry musicians, trolling the ribald catch of *"Grand Thibaut"* on a pleasant green. He twice was sent by the King on diplomatic missions, once to Flanders, and again, in 1469-70, to Spain, a visit which may have been concerned with the Spanish peace treaty of 1484. But it is as a musician that I would see him, at one of those great ceremonies he took part in—the reception of the King of Portugal, the funeral Mass for Edward IV of England, the Mass for Louis XI. The organ was not in his time an essential adjunct. The glories of the Flemish school are *a capella* music. The Basilica of Tours seems indeed to have been without organs at this time, for Guillaume Crétin urges Ockeghem's successor in 1496, Evérard de la Chapelle:

Hé, maistre Evrard, vous estes successeur
D'ung excellent docteur, bien le sçavez;
Je vous requiers, quant serez possesseur,
Faictes bastir orgues de grant doulceur.

> [Hé, Master Evrard, you are, as you well know, the successor to a great doctor. I pray you, when you take possession, have organs built of a singular sweetness.]

There were organs at Cléry, however, the gift of Louis XI; probably of no mean structure, when one remembers the organ of Winchester Cathedral as early as the tenth century, which had 400 pipes and 25 bellows, blown by 70 men, according to report. Pedals had come from Germany in Ockeghem's age.

I have mentioned the praises of Erasmus and of Florio. Tinctoris, in his *Liber de Arte contrapuncte,* hails Ockeghem the most illustrious musician in Europe. And the long Lament of Guillaume Crétin is worth quoting a little further, since it calls on all famous contemporary musicians to assemble under Dame Music to receive Ockeghem in Paradise: Ockeghem, who is

L'appuy, l'apport, le seul pilier d'honneur,
Et clair myrouer des ecclésiastiques,
Le vray guidon de tous bons catholiques,
Des simples gens familier exemplaire . . .

> [The help and support, the only pillar of honor, the clear mirror of ecclesiastics (Ockeghem held Minor Orders, like all lay servants of the Church) the true ensign of all good Catholics, the familiar example for the simple.]

And Crétin calls the roll of the musicians:

Agricola, Verbonnet, Prioris,
Josquin Desprez, Gaspar, Brumel, Compère,
Ne parlez plus de joyeux chants ne riz,
Mais composez ung Ne recorderis
Pour lamenter nostre maistre et bon père,
Prévost, Verjust, tant que Piscis Prospère,
Prenez Fresneau pour vos chants accorder . . .

> [Agricola, Verbonnet, Prioris, Josquin Desprez, Gaspar, Brumel, and Compère, speak no more of joyous songs nor

laughter, but compose a *Ne recorderis* to lament our master and dear father; and you, Prévost, Verjust, and Piscis Prospère, take with you Fresneau to arrange your song. . . .]

And with these:

Là Du Fay, le bon homme, survint,
Bunoys aussi, et aultres plus que vingt,
Fède, Binchois, Barbingant et Donstable,
Pasquin, Lannoy, Barizon très notable,
Copin, Regis, Gilles, Joye, et Constant.

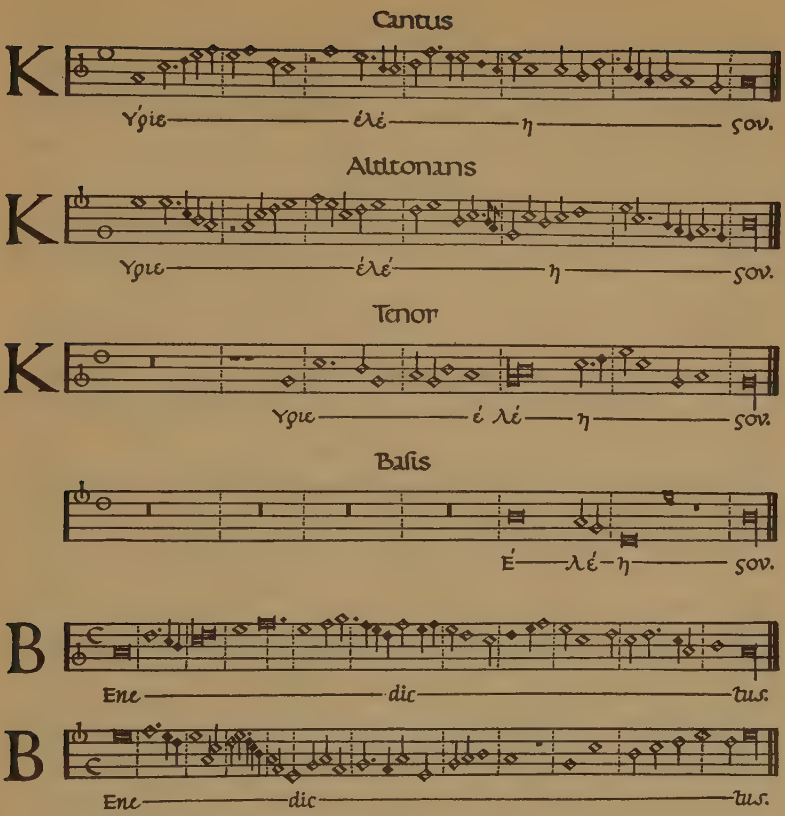
[There the good Dufay advances, and Bunoys with him, and more than twenty more—Fède, Binchois, Barbingant, Dunstable, Pasquin, Lannoy, the most notable Barizon, Copin, Regis, Gilles, Joye, and Constant.]

For Ockeghem, sings the poet, is dead, whose heart was so fervent and pure, who knew no evil, who served forty years and more, faithfully and lovingly, under three kings. I will quote half a dozen more lines of this panegyric, since it announces what has been thought a miraculous and mythical feat on the part of the dead master:

C'est Okergan qu'on doibt plorer et plaindre,
C'est luy qui bien sceut choisir et attaindre
Tous les secrets de la subtilité
Du nouveau chant par sa subtilité
Sans ung seul poinct de ses reigles enfraindre,
Trente-six voix noter, escripre, et paindre
En ung motet. . . .

[It is Ockeghem whom we must mourn and lament, it is he who had the art of selecting and employing all subtle secrets of the new music by his skill, setting down in one motet, without infringing one single rule, thirty-six voices. . . .]

I am not competent to discuss this huge motet for thirty-six voices, which has been a problem for many erudite musicians. It has been identified with an unsigned motet bound up with a complex Psalm by Josquin Desprez, printed at Nurem-


Cantus
K
Ὑριε ἐλέ η σον.
Altitonans
K
Ὑριε ἐλέ η σον.
Tenor
K
Ὑριε ἐ λέ η σον.
Basis
Ἐ λέ η σον.
B
Ene dic tus.
B
Ene dic tus.

Kyrie and *Benedictus* from the Mass "*Cujusvis toni*" of Jehan van Ockeghem.

berg in 1542. Four voices only are written, in canon of nine parts. It is held to be a *tour de force* of the most extraordinary kind. But Ockeghem's masterpiece is the Mass called *Cujusvis toni,* of which the learned Viennese musician Ambros says: "This Mass excites one's admiration by its happy solution of an unique problem. Kiesewetter's short definition, that it is a Mass capable of being sung in any and all clefs and tones at will, requires a more detailed explanation. The Mass as written has no clef marks indicated in the score. In their place are signs resembling interrogation marks or circumflex accents, whose position indicates the *final* note for each voice. . . . The whole composition reſts on the moſt profound knowledge of the eccleſiaſtical tones."

Altogether Ockeghem's works, or those at present surviving and discovered—they are for the moſt part in the Chigi Collection at Rome—number about fifty. The motet *Miles miræ probitatis,* in honor of Saint Martin of Tours, was celebrated, and more than one of his *Salves* and *Aves* might, one thinks, be revived with advantage in place of the faded warblings and tinsel of Gounod and his imitators which are ſtill to some extent, despite the recent *Motu Proprio,*[3] the joy of uncultivated or suburban choirmasters. What J. K. Huysmans said in his fury about these, God help them, need not be repeated. They continue to grieve the judicious. Of Ockeghem's secular works I know nothing at all, but some of the titles of his songs have all the fragrance of their age: *O Rosa bella* (an embroidered theme), *Baisiez-moy donc, Ma bouche rit* (for three voices), *Petite Camusette* (for four), *Rondo royal.* Some of these, no doubt, handsome Maſter Ockeghem sang himself in his golden voice, to the touching of a lute, while fair lips murmured compliments and beautiful eyes shone admiration, and all long since crumbled into duſt and silence.

Tomorrow, more's the pity,
  Away we both muſt hie,
To air the ditty,
  And to earth I.

The opinion of Ambros, the erudite, on Ockeghem's music as a whole may be reasonably quoted here. "What raises him above his predecessors is not the truly astonishing perfection of the canonical and other artifices one finds in him. His intimate musical genius is such that he breathes into his work a soul of song, envelops it in a body of harmony, and adorns it with a fine tissue of ingenious thematic development. . . . In the compositions of Ockeghem one discovers whole periods filled with a melodic development of the most admirable kind, with a sweetness and profundity of expression which are extraordinary."

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[3] 1903. Issued by Pius X, founder of the Pontifical School of Sacred Music.

Whether Louis XI cared much for his Master of Music's compositions, or for any music, is doubtful. Few hunting men have an ear for any melody but one. Louis certainly often specifies, when founding a Mass, that it is to be with music, *à notes,* and allows for the singer's fee; but this may have been only for the greater solemnity of the Office. The daily sung Mass and Vespers in the Chapel Royal at Tours and at Cléry, again, were traditional, and belonged to every great lord's household. When Louis furnished Cléry with organs it was probably as much for the sake of adding splendor to the celebrations of the daily Office there as for any personal taste for music, and as for the ordinances confirming the privileges of the *menestrels* of Paris and allowing itinerant musicians, *chanteurs et recordeurs de chansons,* liberty to travel freely up and down France, these once more indicate rather his feeling for the common people than anything else.

Reluctantly we dismiss the figure of Jehan de Ockeghem back into the shadows, to his place in the Happy Fields with the dead musicians, the "sweet breasts," as our ancestors said. Whatever there is of good fortune and serene happiness in this false life he must have known, exercising all his days mastery in that art which approaches nearest, humanly speaking, to the joys of Paradise.

2

ARNOUL GRÉBAN, DRAMATIST

§ 1

The state of the theater in France in the second half of the fifteenth century was flourishing, as it was during the entire Middle Ages in Europe. But there is only one French dramatist of Louis XI's period: his name is Arnoul Gréban.

It is necessary to remember that in the XVth century French theater Paris had no monopoly of dramatic composition and representation. In almost every town there was a society of amateur players, producing pieces sacred, moral or comic, written for them by one of their society, or some other anonymous clerk. Thus Paris had the great Confraternity of the Passion, the Basoche, or law-clerks' guild, and the *Enfans Sans Souci,* with their farces.[1] Dijon had the *Mère Folle* and her gay troop. All over the north of France, in Picardy, Artois, and Flanders, were similar companies. Normandy had the famous *Cornards.* The popular taste of the time was equally divided between Scriptural dramas and tableaux of the Incarnation and the Passion, and rhymed farces in which the players gave rein to the freest and most salt satire at the expense of Authority. Everywhere during the age there are pageants, processions, royal entries, holiday performances, in which these troops take part. And the various trade guilds (as in England) mount and produce their own Misteries[2] on the feast of their patron saint.

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[1] These last were the residuary legatees of the Feast of Fools at the Epiphany, so often condemned and now declined.

The completeness of the records which are preserved of such English events as the Corpus Christi Plays at York, in which half the town took part, reveal the careful sumptuousness of these productions. In Coventry, for example, the Guild of the Smiths produced and played the Trial, Condemnation and Passion of Our Lord in Easter week and at Corpus Christi, 1490. The expenses embrace not only costumes and accessories but meat and drink for the players.

Imprimis, in Brede (bread)	iiij^{e}
Item, in Ale	viij^{d}
Item, in Kechyn (cooking)	xiij^{d}

and so down, a long list. And again:

Payd to the players for *Corpus Xsti*-daye:

Imprimis, to God	ij^{s}
Item, to Cayphas	iij^{s}iiij^{d}
Item, to Heroude	ij^{s}iiij^{d}
Item, to Pilatt his wyff	ij^{s}
Item, to the Bedull	iiij^{d} (etc.)

The "Bedull" provided some of the comic relief which the medievals saw no harm in mixing with sacred things. The actor who played Almighty God would be richly vested from the sacristy; there is a well-known story in Rabelais describing what happened to a Franciscan lay-brother who refused to lend a cope from his store to God the Father in the Passion play of St. Maixent in Poitou, for in France the custom was the same. When the Confraternity of St. Romain played a Mistery of the life of their patron saint outside Notre Dame, the Chapter of Rouen lent them copes, chasubles, tapestries, books, even a mitre and crozier, and several canons took part in it. To a large extent, indeed, the sacred dramas were played everywhere by *clercs* and ecclesiastics. But it is the Confraternity of the Passion, a lay company, which is famous in France and Europe during the reign of Louis XI, and to which the fame of Arnoul Gréban is attached.

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[2] *Misteries,* from Middle English *Mistere,* a craft; late Latin *misterium,* from *ministerium,* employment or service. Mistery plays were so called because acted by craftsmen. (Skeat, *Etymological Dictionary.*)

The history of this celebrated, this splendid troop of actors, whose society Charles VI recognized by letters-patent in 1402, is vague up to that year. It is thought that the royal charter simply transformed into a theatrical enterprise what had hitherto been carried on by the members in the ordinary manner as an act of piety and edification. The Confraternity, thus established and chartered, fixed their headquarters at the Church and Hospital of the Trinity by the St. Denis gate, where they gave regular performances of Misteries. These productions were stately, they were—especially after the English occupation of Paris ended in 1436—more and more splendid in costume and magnitude, and they were very popular. In due course the Parisian public demanded variety, and the Confraternity entered into an amicable agreement with the *Enfans Sans Souci,* who, in association with the Basoche, supplied their programme with alternating farces or *soties.* It is impossible to think of the *Enfans,* these joyous hungry Bohemians and rag-tag, notorious in their time for sharp wits and sharp features, without thinking simultaneously of François Villon, whose spirit was so akin to theirs and who undoubtedly mingled with their company, as many of his kind about University were accustomed to do. He makes the

Prince of Fools, their captain, a bequeſt in the *Grant Testament:*

> *Item, et au Prince des Sotz*
> *Pour ung bon sot Michault du Four,*
> *Qui a la fois dit de bons motz*
> *Et chante bien "Ma doulce Amour."*
>
> [Item, I give the Prince of Fools
> A Maſter-fool, Michault du Four,
> The jollieſt jeſter in the Schools
> That sings so well "Ma doulce Amour."]
>
> —PAYNE.

There are other indications also. Reference in the sixth of the *Repues Franches,* that collection of rapscallion Parisian verse glorifying Villon, but published after his final disappearance, to the *Gallans sans soucy,* who called themselves in jeſt "vassals of the Abbé de Sainte-Soufrette," may or may not point to the theater troop. But the lines in the seventh *Repue* concerning a notable paſty at a night-frolic under the gibbet of Montfaucon—

> *Tant eſtoit grant, point n'en doubtez,*
> *Le Prince des Sotz et sa routte*
> *En eussent eſté bien souppez—*
>
> [It was of such a size, believe me, that the Prince of Fools and all his rout might well have supped on it.]

certainly do. It is to be presumed that the dark, hangdog features of the poet were more often to be seen in the crowd at a *sotie* than at any performance of the great Passion of Maſter Arnoul Gréban.

§ 2

The epithet "great" implies here size rather than genius. Gréban's *Mistery of the Passion* is gigantic. Its acting parts number 220, exclusive of crowds and choruses. It took four successive days to play, thus throwing the more extended efforts of Mr. Bernard Shaw and Mr. Eugene O'Neill well into the shadow. It covers the period from the Fall to the Ascension—an innovation in its time. With the exception of the *Mistery of the Acts of the Apostles,* in which Arnoul Gréban collaborated with his brother Simon, it is the vastest religious drama the Middle Ages produced, in any country. Its main story follows the text of Scripture minutely; for the rest it employs the learned formulæ of the Schools and (for the lower characters—executioners, soldiers, messengers, devils, minor low comedy relief) the locutions of the streets, the taverns, and the prisons. Its realism is sometimes painful, as in the Crucifixion scene, which took on the stage almost the same time as the Sacrifice of Calvary. Its production, at once solemn, spectacular, and simultaneous—Heaven, Earth, and Hell presented in the same triple vertical *mise-en-scène,* with the constant movement of brightly-clothed characters and crowds, the music, chanting and bells, the thunders of Hell—must have been something like the kind of production Reinhardt has tried to realize.

The general impression on the mind of the whole piece has been admirably crystalized into a comparison (I think by Gaston Paris) with a triptych by some Flemish Old Master. In the left-hand panel stands Jerusalem, compact, walled and steepled, a Gothic city like Bruges or Ghent, set neatly on a hill. The grouped burghers, dressed in fifteenth-century costume, stare at the procession as it passes, in the center, to

Calvary; the Roman soldiers dressed like chevaliers, the august Victim's features pale and expressionless, masking a pain transcending human pain. In the right-hand panel the three crosses stand equally spaced on Calvary, and the Sacrifice is consummated, while high above in golden clouds God the Father, vested in jeweled cope and triple tiara, the Dove beneath, awaits the triumphant ascension of God the Son. The Passion of Master Arnoul Gréban, *notable bachelier en théologie,* conveys exactly this impression. His play is a tremendous feat. Had he possessed instead of a solid workmanlike talent the spark of genius, his name might possibly have been quoted with Racine's, or even Shakespeare's. But he is far below their level. Originality of treatment was impossible for the most part in a piece founded on the text of Holy Writ, and above all in depicting Our Lord. Where Gréban might have introduced originality, into his minor characters, his messengers, executioners, devils, soldiers, he is content to follow tradition. This is not to say that he cannot now and again devise a vivid dramatic scene: for example, the matter-of-fact professional cries of the executioners' men hauling the Cross into position, under Pilate's supervision. These cries lose their force in translation:

PILATE

Amont!

GRIFFON

Amont!

CLAQUEDENT

Halle bois!

ORILLART

Halle!

Soustenez la!

BRAYART

Mes souſtenez!

Tout le fais dessus nous devalle!
Amont!

BROYEFFORT

Amont!

GRIFFON

Halle bois!

CLAQUEDENT

Halle!

This is as living, as ſtertorous, as any group of modern laborers hauling and sweating at a beam. So also throughout the play the figure of Our Lady is filled with life. Gréban rises to inspiration in his treatment of her. She is the *Mater Dolorosa* with her heart full of swords, and the laments he puts into her mouth are sometimes extremely beautiful, always moving, and informed with pure human passion. "You are all mine!" cries the Mother of God at the foot of the Cross to her dying Son. "Oh, my Child! consider, my share in you is so much greater than that other mothers have, for the father has a share in their children, but you are all my own!"

O mon enffant, mon fait considerez,
donner ma part jà ne deliberez,
j'ay part en vous, se bien la moderez,
trop plus feconde
qu'aultres mères, plus precieuse et monde;
car aux enffans qu'elz engendront au monde
n'ont qu'une part, le père a la seconde:
tout eſtes mien!

The lament is long, and throbs with maternal agony and supplication. If every other part of the play were at this level it would be a maſterpiece of force and underſtanding. But there are desert ſtretches in it, as ſterile, flat and endless as some pages of Wagner. The interminable academic discussion between Justice, Mercy, Truth and Peace is in the worst and most arid manner of the Schools of the University of Paris, of which Gréban was a graduate. Such *noble rhethorique* was a pleasure of the educated and a fashion of that age. It is difficult to conceive how the lower populace could have borne these stretches, for the lofty matters under discussion and the technical procedure of the arguments must have been Chinese to them. Doubtless they gazed dumb and patient at the four majestic figures moving stiffly to and fro and holding incomprehensible speech, buoyed up by the sure knowledge that Hell would sooner or later be rumbling, the Heavens opening, and a brisker commerce ensuing on Earth.

It may be of value to sketch the barest possible outline of Gréban's Passion. The stage is occupied first by the Prologus alone, who advances and begins solemnly, in the manner of Milton:

> *Veni ad liberandum nos,*
> *Domine Deus virtutum!*
> For the sin of our first father
> Which all our human race should expiate
> In grievous servitude,
> The Son of God was willing, in high mystery,
> To cover his shining Divinity
> With the veil of human nature. . . .

and so continues:

> Devout souls who are gathered
> To hear this salutary matter
> Open your eyes, and listen,
> And keep a loving silence . . .
> Our especial intention
> Is to treat of the high mystery
> Of Christ and His Passion.

The Prologue follows, with the scene placed in the Court of Heaven. Lucifer and his angels rebel and are cast down to Hell (here again the language is pure Milton), and Adam and Eve are created on earth. The sin of our first parents, their banishment and death bring the Prologue to its close. The play proper begins then, and may be briefly summarized under the action of each day.

The First Day opens with a dialogue in Limbo between the souls of Adam, Eve, David, Isaiah, and Ezekiel. In Heaven God the Father, after hearing Mercy, Justice, Truth, Peace, and Sapience, announces the forthcoming redemption of mankind by the birth of a Saviour. Choruses of angelic joy break forth, answered by the raging of Hell. A roundel sung by the demons in chorus in this place is not without rhythm:

RONDEAU

La dure Mort eternelle
c'est la chançon des dampnés;
bien nous tient à sa cordelle
la dure Mort eternelle;
nous l'avons desservy telle
et à luy sommes donnés.
la dure Mort eternelle
c'est la chançon des dampnés.

[Roughly:

Death, Death without end,
Is the damnèd ones' chorus,
In these toils are we penned,
Death, Death without end;
Such we merit, perpend!
Such is ever before us;
Death, Death without end
Is the damnèd ones' chorus.[3]]

---

[3] Compare the much more realistic chorus of demons in Newman's "Dream of Gerontius."

There follows, on earth, the Incarnation, strictly following the Gospel accounts, with a beautiful outburst of joy from Our Lady crying to her newborn Child:

O puissante magnificence,
O pitié, O compassion,
O riche tresor de clemence,
O divine Incarnacion!

[O puissant Magnificence! O pity, O compassion, O rich Treasure of Clemency, O divine Incarnation!]

The adoration of the Shepherds Aloris, Ysambert, Pellion, and Rifflart is of its kind as naïve and lovely as that famous scene of the Shepherds in the Second Wakefield Nativity Play of the English cycles. It was, I find, transplanted bodily (and without acknowledgment) from Gréban into the adorable *Grant Kalendrier des Bergiers*. The worship of the Kings follows, and (to abridge) the whole Scriptural story is steadily developed, with subsidiary scenes, to the Finding in the Temple. Here one may pause a moment to observe with what care Gréban follows Scripture in portraying the figure of Christ. Our Lady and St. Joseph, after a long search, find Christ at length in the Temple, brilliantly disputing with the Doctors in the manner of the Faculty of Theology of the University of Paris. Our Lady rushes to her Son and kisses him, crying: "Oh my sweet gracious child, my sweet perfect son, what hast thou done to us, what hast thou done to thy poor mother? God knows how thy father and I have sought thee in sorrow and despair!" The young Christ answers her mildly:

Et qu'est ce que vous me querez
si fort? ne sçavez vous pas, mère,
qu'ès choses qui sont à mon Père
et touchent sa magnificence
il me convient estre en presence?

These are the actual words of the Gospel, very slightly rearranged for the purposes of rhyme. On all such occasions Gréban is equally accurate.

This scene ends the First Day.

The Second Day opens with the mission of St. John Baptist and his martyrdom, followed by the gathering of the Apostles, the Feast at Cana, the Sermon on the Mount, the Transfiguration, and the various miracles in Scripture proper in their order to this period; to which succeed the Entry into Jerusalem, the Washing of Feet, the Betrayal in Gethsemane, the Denial of St. Peter, and the Trial before Anna and Caiaphas. All these principal scenes, as before, have secondary incidents in support and relief. The movement and noise and color of the crowds on the stage before the high Gothic background no doubt made this day's performance a spectacle of extreme and moving splendor.

The Third Day brings the final tragedy of the Passion and echoes here and there, probably not unintentionally, the poignant solemnities of the Good Friday Office. The Prologus advances and begins:

To continue this matter,
So profitable and precious
To hearts filled with devotion,
Treating of the manner
Of the Passion,
Whereby we were redeemed
For our salvation,
Let us each one,
Before we begin,
Salute Our Lady in contemplation,
Saying humbly an *Ave*.

Ave, Maria, gratia plena, etc.

This devotion done,
We humbly pray you, gentles,
To keep a little silent,
Bending your underſtanding
To realize the pain,
The charity, the perfect love
With which this Passion embraces
And enfolds our human nature . . .

The trial before Pilate follows, then the despair and damnation of Judas (who holds a long and curious dialogue with Despair), the *Ecce Homo* (here news is sent to our firſt parents in Limbo that the hour of redemption is near), the ceremony of the Crown of Thorns, with its attendant cruelties, the Way of the Cross, and at length the Sacrifice. The Descent into Hell follows, closely resembling the Harrowing of Hell in our English miracle play. In both the Soul of Chriſt enters Hell to that superb theme *Attolite portas,* which is like a brazen fanfare of trumpets. In the English play it begins:

Jhesu: *Principes portas tollite,*
Undo your gates, ye princes of pride,
Et introibit Rex gloriæ!
The King of bliss comes in this tide.

In Gréban:

The Spirit of Jesus
Attolite portas, principes, veſtras, et elevamini portæ eternales, et introibit Rex gloriæ!

Souls in Limbo
Quis eſt iſte Rex gloriæ? (etc.)

In both the devils moan and rage helplessly ("Out, behold our bailey broken!" roars the devil in the English play, "and burſten are all our bonds of brass!") and the souls of the righteous lying in Limbo rejoice and follow their Saviour as Eurydice followed Orpheus. The scene returns to earth, with the Descent from the Cross, of which a very vivid, human, fussy Nicodemus takes charge, crying "Now! Hold, there! Now pull hard! Now!" etc. The Body is laid in the Tomb and the Roman guard placed.

The Fourth Day opens in a riot of Easter bells and trumpets and a joyous clamor of the Resurrection. The Ascension follows, the Holy Ghost descends on Our Lady and the Apostles, now joyous and glorified, and a final "morality" in the Court of Heaven, in which God the Father, Our Lord, St. Michael, Mercy, Truth, Justice, Peace, Virtue, and Sapience speak together in the presence of all the angelic host, leads the play to its conclusion with the benediction of Almighty God. After which the Prologus advances on the empty stage for the last time and, saluting the public, speaks the Epilogue:

> Gentles, you have now heard and seen
> This demonstration
> Of the Passion
> Of our Lord Jesus Christ,
> His Resurrection and glorious Ascension,
> And the coming of the Holy Spirit;
> If we have anywhere in it,
> In speech or writing,
> Committed any fault, may God pardon us!
> We have endeavored to keep the strict path
> Without stumbling or error;
> But if we have made any mistake,
> We hereby submit our words and deeds
> To your benign correction—
> To those who have perceived such,
> Or to those who can perform this work better . . .
> So to finish our Mistery
> Joyously and with honor,
> To end it fittingly,
> Let us give thanks to God the Father,
> Singing: *Te Deum Laudamus.*

§ 3

Little enough is known of the life of Gréban, except that he was born about 1420, was received Master of Arts in the University of Paris before 1444, was afterwards entered of the Faculty of Theology and took his bachelor's degree, wrote the Passion before 1452, became later a canon of Le Mans Cathedral, and died about 1471. His Passion has been a museum-piece ever since the performance of misteries was brought to an end by law in 1548. The surviving Passion of Ober-Ammergau, vivid, sincere, and horribly loomed over by the heavy dual shadow of Baedeker and Cook, gives some authentic echo of its manner and matter. Even nearer to it in essentials is the newly-revived annual Passion of Nancy, which is still, at the time of this writing, a deliberate act of faith and piety and not a tourist spectacle. Today, too, the inner flame of Gréban burns clear in half a dozen austerely simple and beautiful plays by a French dramatist of genius who, occupying an assured position in the van of the modern-intellectuals, has also returned to the Faith and revived the Catholic Drama with considerable triumph, spiritual and artistic: M. Henri Ghéon, whose *Marvellous History of St. Bernard* recently conquered even the London commercial stage. In some considerable degree the same flame burns in Claudel, for all his preciosities, and in Sierra. I have mentioned Reinhardt. The famous production of *The Miracle,* in its splendor and magnificent crowd-evolutions, stands in much the same relation to Gréban's work as a careful reproduction of the ceremonies of High Mass on the stage would stand to a celebration of High Mass in any church in the world: the externals, the spectacle, are there, sumptuous, exaggerated, the atmosphere is skillfully suggested, the whole may be a *pastiche* dazzlingly presenting to the casual eye the illusion of reality; but actually it is a meaningless and lifeless simulacrum lacking the central Motive, the living Mystery, the august Act which is the sole object and *raison d'être* of the ceremonial. In Gréban's play the obscurest, most careless, most drunken "super" engaged haphazard would know confusedly that he was participating in a collective, familiar act of faith. It is doubtful whether the same could be said of Reinhardt's crowds.

To compare Gréban's production technically with Reinhardt's does not seem to me fantastic. To handle 220 actors with speaking parts and a crowd of dimensions unknown, to marshal and direct their entrances, exits, and grouping in a constant succession of swiftly-changing episodes must have required a respectable technique on Gréban's part or his producer's. In more than one place in the script the artistic effect of silence, of the pause, is skillfully utilized—for example, after one or more poignant laments of Our Lady. This is still a part of the art of production. Again, there were the choruses, and again, the incidental noises. For these and other parts of the action there are many stage-directions in the script. *Icy doivent fere grant tempeste*—here they must make a great tumult, runs one of the directions for Hell. *Icy s'enclinent devant luy*—here they bow low before Him, is inserted at the beginning of the mockeries of the Crown of Thorns. It is evident that long and arduous rehearsals were necessary. The name of the man who ordered all and brought it to performance remains unknown, like the names of so many admirable artificers of the Middle Ages whose feats live in the fabric of the Gothic cathedrals.

Let there be so sentimentality concerning Arnoul Gréban. In his day the commercial stage hardly existed, but he was not blockhead enough ("No man but a blockhead ever wrote except for money"—Dr. Johnson) to refuse payment for his work. In December, 1452, we find the town of Abbeville paying him a fee of ten crowns for a copy of the Passion and performing rights. Gréban may thus be called a Father of Dramatic Royalty-Collectors, and joins hands down the ages with Mr. Shaw much as the prehistoric inventor of the round wheel is linked in eternal brotherhood with Mr. Henry Ford. The Abbeville royalty is the only one Gréban is recorded as receiving; but since his Passion entirely superseded the other misteries played by the Confraternity of the Passion it is likely that he drew other fees from its frequent performances.

His vast play remains, as I have said, a museum piece. It could hardly be revived for the amusement of the superior as the *Callimachus* of the tenth-century Saxon nun Hroswitha was revived in London a few years ago, for its bulk is too enormous and its length too fatiguing. One may endure Mr. O'Neill for six hours and Mr. Shaw for ten (mercifully split up into three evenings), but what modern could be asked to stand twenty-four hours or more of God Almighty?

Gréban's Passion is as dead as the Middle Ages; yet I would willingly compare it with one of those mummies of Egypt in whose burial-case there is preserved a seed of age-old corn which contains the principle of life and which, once planted again, springs green from the dust of the centuries.

3

FRANÇOIS VILLON, POET

On September 24, 1461, Louis XI, newly crowned, left Paris after a month's stay for his beloved Touraine, the country of his heart. The Parisians had received their new king with the traditional ceremonies and spectacles: tapestried streets, allegorical groups at the principal gates, fountains spouting milk and hippocras, Scriptural misteries played in dumb show by the Confraternity of the Passion, a representation of the victory of Dieppe, a *Te Deum* sung at Notre Dame in a blaze of wax lights and a thunder of bells and organs and cries of *"Noël!"*, the traditional banquet at the Palais. The Duke of Burgundy, at Louis' elbow, continued to outshine the King in magnificence at the Hôtel d'Artois, Louis, lodged at the Tournelles, devoting his time already to the routine work of his trade—the confirming of the privileges of a score of Parisian corporations, the assembling of the Parlement and the University. Now he is off on the first of his innumerable journeys as King of France, quitting his capital without comment and without regret.

He made his "joyous entry" into Orleans on October 19, releasing all prisoners in the jails in accordance with the ancient clement custom of Christian kings. Next day he arrived at Meung-sur-Loire. In the prison of the Bishops of Orleans at Meung, of which the thick Tower of Manassès remains, there lay in one of the lower dungeons a blackguard clerk, a Master of Arts of the University of Paris: a lean, sick, haggard, villainous dried-up creature with a gashed lip and the worst of records, a laureate of the Parisian underworld, a homicide and a thief, one of the world's great poets: François Villon.

It is not known for what specific crime Villon was held in the dungeons of Monseigneur Thibault d'Aussigny, Bishop of Orleans. The documents have vanished. He had been there all through the summer of 1461:

Peu m'a d'une petite miche
Et de froide eaue tout ung esté,
[A summer long he nourished me
Upon cold water and dry bread.]

and he had suffered the routine punishment of the Question:

Dieu mercy et Tacque Thibault,
Qui tant d'eaue froide m'a fait boire,
Mis en bas lieu, non pas en hault,
Mengier d'angoisse mainte poire . . .

[Thanks be to God and Tacque Thibault
Who made me drink of water cold
So much within a dungeon low,
And also chew gags manifold.][1]

from which it may be plausibly conjectured that his crime was serious and his behavior stubborn. The Bishop of Orleans was a strong man of high character, exemplary piety, strict devotion to duty, and no sentimentality, and any lapsed clerk falling into his hands might expect the worst. His portrait as drawn by his prisoner in the *Grant Testament* is somewhat colored by the prisoner's point of view, and should be compared with more trustworthy records.

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[1] I give Payne's translation, which, though inadequate, is the least tortured.

This prisoner, brooding in his straw, sees the door of his dungeon flung wide open on October 20 and hears a brusque order. He is free, with the rest of the Bishop's *pensionnaires*. He staggers out into daylight, whooping joyfully and giving thanks to Almighty God, Our Lady, and Louis XI:

Loué soit il, et Nostre Dame,
Et Loys, le bon roy de France!

—to whom (the King) he pours forth his gratitude in a roaring verse:

Auquel doint Dieu l'eur de Jacob,
Et de Salmon l'onneur et gloire;
Quant de proesse, il en a trop,
De force aussi, par m'ame, voire!
En ce monde cy transitoire,
Tant qu'il a de long et de lé,
Affin que de luy soit memoire,
Vivre autant que Mathusalé!

Et douze beaux enfans, tous masles,
Voire de son chier sang royal,
Aussi preux que fut le grant Charles,
Conceus en ventre nupcial,
Bons comme fut sainct Martial!
Ainsi en preigne au feu Dauphin.
Je ne luy souhaite autre mal,
Et puis Paradis a la fin.

[Whom God with Jacob's luck endow,
  And glory of great Solomon!
Of doughtiness he has enow,
  In sooth, and of dominion.
In all the lands the sun shines on,
  In this our world of night and day,
God grant his fame and memory wonne
  As long as lived Methusaleh!

May twelve fair sons perpetuate
  His royal lineage, one and all
As valorous as Charles the Great,
  Conceived in matrix conjugal,
  As doughty as Saint Martial!
The late Lord Dauphin fare likewise;
  Nor worser fortune him befall
Than this, and after, Paradise!]

—Payne.

Whether Louis ever read these verses, whether he had ever read the previous *Petit Teſtament,* whether he knew anything of the fame, already eſtablished in certain quarters, of the Parisian poet he had delivered, is problematical. He was a ſtranger to Paris, one recollects. His visits had been few and short. Moreover, his own taſte in literature was concerned more with hiſtory than with poetry, and from now on he will have little time for any reading. Had he been on terms of any intimacy with Robert d'Eſtouteville, Provoſt of Paris, Villon's friend and protector, he would probably have learned something of the poet: but already one of his firſt acts had been to dismiss d'Estouteville and appoint Villiers de l'Isle Adam in his place. On the other hand d'Eſtouteville appears in the liſt of chamberlains to the Household between 1463 and 1464, so it is perhaps conceivable that the name of Villon may have come at some time or other to Louis' ears, and possibly a manuscript of the *Grant Teſtament* lay on his table. There is a legend to the effect that Louis actually observed of Villon, whether at Meung or later, that he could not afford to hang this fellow because, although his kingdom held a hundred thousand ruffians of equal rascality, it held only one poet, François Villon, so excelling in *gentilz dictz & ingenieux sçavoir.* But there is no hiſtorical foundation for this, which smells villainously of the lamp.

The King, then, signed the amnesty and rode about his business. The chief result of the gaol-delivery at Meung was the composition of the *Grant Testament,* with its tears and laughter, its self-searching and remorse and curses and prayers and mockery, its lovely delicacy and its deep religious faith, its glowing pictures and its superb mastery of language, its haunting melancholy, its noble strains of high music and its gutter-songs. "What a magical stream of jewels!" cries J. K. Huysmans in the *Drageoir aux Epices,* "What a strange clustering of fires! What astonishing rending of primitive sunset-tinted fabrics! What fantastic striping of colors, vivid and gloomy!" All this the world owes undoubtedly to the passage of Louis XI that day. Had Villon remained in the Bishop's prison to die or be hanged, as would possibly have happened sooner or later, the buffoonery of the *Petit Testament,* with its tavern jokes and gibes, would have been his only bequest to posterity: yet better than some poets', if not glorious. It is obviously read by thousands today, to judge by regular reprints; whereas who reads the vast mass of verse left by—for example—Southey?

The life of Villon, with its criminal *décor,* has been fully considered in a recent survey.[2] We are chiefly concerned here with estimating Villon's position in the artistic life of the reign of Louis XI. Surveying him thus, it is evident at once that he is supreme. He has no competitors. The period of Louis XI, as Pierre Champion truly observes, was a period of prose, not of poetry. The declining Middle Ages gave birth to no other European poet. Villon himself is not a medieval poet, but a new voice, a modern voice, a forerunner. The other French poets of the period of any quality are Charles d'Orléans and Martial d'Auvergne. Immediately before them, in the same century, come Christine de Pisan, whose verses have a faint, delicate, feminine grace, and Alain Chartier, a pedant. Both are outside our interest here. Contemporary with Villon are Philippe le Bon, Duke of Burgundy, who toyed a little, in a gentlemanly manner, with verse; Martin Franc, and Coquillart, all three greatly admired by their contemporaries, and (one might almost add "therefore") negligible. Not one of these three is for a moment worthy of comparison with Villon. Charles d'Orléans produced a few, a very few, lovely poems—the famous Roundels of Spring, for example, and the salute to his love at morning which begins

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[2] "François Villon: a Documented Survey": Coward-McCann and Edwin V. Mitchell, New York and Hartford, Conn., 1928.

Dieu! qu'il la fait bon regarder
La gracieuse bonne et belle!

Nor can there be passed over with full recognition that final delicately ironic thing he wrote, which begins:

Saluez moy toute la compaignie
Ou a present estes a chière lie . . .

But, however graceful and beautiful his finest flights, Charles d'Orléans remains a noble amateur. As for Martial d'Auvergne, he was the Kipling of his time, expressing patriotism in bad verse. One of the most tolerable of his poems is that I find quoted in the *Grant Kalendrier des Bergiers,* a "Shepherd's Song," naïve and charming enough:

Doulces chansonnettes,
Plaisans bergerettes,
Toutes nouvellettes,
Pas ne s'y celoient;
Bousquets de violettes
A brins d'amourettes
Et fleurs joliettes
Par la s'y voyoient.
Oyseaulx garilloient

Qui nous reveilloient
Et rossignoloient . . .

The dainty meter sings itself, to the *fioriture* of the shepherd's pipe; but this is not great poetry. It is at once drowned by the imperial organ-note of Villon in such a poem as the Ballade of Our Lady, or the Ballade of Dead Ladies, or the Ballade of the Hanged. The best of Charles d'Orléans, perfect of its *genre* as it is, similarly fades into silence and insignificance before the note of the master. One of the curious lapses of the eighteenth century, the century of good taste, was its exaltation of Charles d'Orléans over Villon; though as a critic has said, this preference may be traced in some degree to the *penchant* of the period for proving Boileau wrong—the superb Boileau, literary dictator of the preceding century, whose condescending shoulder-pat in the *Art Poétique* is familiar:

Villon sut le premier, dans ces siècles grossiers,
Débrouiller l'art confus de nos vieux romanciers.

[Villon, in that barbarous age, was the first to unravel the confused handiwork of our old romance-writers.]

Louis XI, therefore, liberated the first poet of his age when he signed the amnesty at Meung. To this act we owe the *Grant Testament,* which was written after Villon's release. By such seeming accidents is the history of literature often decided. Had the dilatory Johnson not been forced to find money quickly for his mother's funeral we should probably never have had "Rasselas," that superb epitome of the vanity of this life, written at high pressure in the evenings of one week. Had a "person from Porlock" not broken in on Coleridge as his brain was giving shape to "Kubla Khan" we might have had a whole marvel, instead of a fragment. Had Kingsley, in his breezy bigotry, never been moved (possibly by dyspepsia) to asperse Newman's honor, English literature would have been the poorer for the noble perfection of the "Apologia." And again, as I think Mr. Max Beerbohm has admirably remarked, if Byron had not died in glory at Missolonghi, what reams of stodgy verse and letters to the *Times* might we not have had from him in his middle and old age!

One might quote a score more examples of the haphazard dealings of Fate with the sons of Apollo. But for Louis XI's first royal progress into Touraine in the September of 1461 Villon would almost certainly never have survived the prison of Meung. He was a sick man, worn out with privations and debauchery. He was a hardened criminal ripe for the gallows. Better men than he had swung for less. That was a harsh age, with humanity strongly intermixed with its harshness. It kept prisoners in dark and fetid dungeons, but it did not plunge them into the hell of solitary confinement in a sanitary cell which is the modern ideal. It imprisoned men, but it visited them in prison with charity, after the Scriptural injunction. It inflicted pain on the body, but not on the soul. Villon never suffered the tortures of Oscar Wilde. It is worth remembering that of all the world's poetry distilled from the sufferings of prison "The Ballad of Reading Gaol" is the most terrible.

Villon was released from Meung, and returned to his old companions, and fell into sore trouble again, and was once more brought within tiptoe distance of the rope, and finally was exiled, after which nothing more is heard of him. The enchantment of his verse has never weakened, from his day to ours. He dominates his century. If Louis XI had been a nonentity his place would be assured in history as that of the man who liberated Villon: assured, that is, as long as there are those who care for letters, which may yet with good fortune hold out againſt Finance and Democracy a generation or two more.

X

APPENDICES

A. Our Lady of Cléry
B. The Rosebush of War
C. Principal Sources

APPENDIX A

OUR LADY OF CLÉRY

THE famous statue, enthroned above the high altar at Cléry today, is carved from one block of oak, 1 metre, .07 high. Is this the original primitive statue turned up, according to the only story of its origin, by a ploughshare in a field at Cléry in 1280 and since venerated in pilgrimages not only by the populace but by Philippe le Bel, Charles IV, Charles VII, and above all Louis XI, and after him by St. Francis Xavier, the Emperor Charles the Fifth, and a long line of notables? Or when Condé's Huguenots sacked and looted the church of Cléry in 1562, did this statue go into the flames, in which case the present one is a copy?

Opinions of archæologists are divided. The present learned curé-doyen of Cléry, M. Lucien Millet,[1] and M. Louis Jarry in his History of Cléry,[2] have summed up the evidence on both sides, with the joint conclusion that very probably the present statue is a copy made in the XVIth century.

The statue, divested of its Spanish cope, is seen to be completely modeled, and the faces of the Mother and Child are lightly flesh-tinted. The crowned Mother, seated on a throne without a back, holds the Child on her knees, with both hands. He is naked—a cardinal argument for the "copy" school, since medieval Infant Chriſts are always clothed; moreover, the Mother wears no veil, contrary to the universal medieval cuſtom. The type and modeling of her clothing are likewise poſt-medieval. On the other hand the Society of Archæologiſts of France in 1894, commenting on the hieratic attitude of the Cléry ſtatue, compared it with that of the primitive Virgins of Beaulieu in Corrèze and elsewhere in the Center.

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[1] *Notre-Dame de Cléry:* Paris, 1926.

[2] *Histoire de Cléry,* etc.: Orleans, 1899.

External evidence is confusing. When the Huguenot forces descended on Cléry a canon named Sabatier, who was in charge of the treasury, was able to save some of the precious vessels, chalices, monſtrances, reliquaries, etc., and get away in time. The hiſtorian Lemaire, recording this, makes no mention of the ſtatue of Our Lady. But since the ſtatue was the second moſt precious thing in the church, and since the troops of Condé were especially given to profaning and deſtroying such, could it not be deduced that the ſtatue was the second thing Sabatier would lay hands on? On the other hand two other hiſtorians, Souchet of Chartres (1589-1654) and Canon Médon of Cléry, writing within the same century, affirm positively—the latter from contemporary local sources—that Condé's soldiers seized and degraded Our Lady's ſtatue, "covering it," says Médon, "with a foul dirty shirt, tying it to a mule's tail, and dragging it to the Martroi in Orleans, where they burned it."

On the whole it would seem that the present ſtatue, which has a sufficiently venerable hiſtory even if it is not the one before which Louis XI so often knelt, would be a successor, fashioned after the original in many reſpects, and soon after the sacking of Cléry, which Henri III reſtored to its former splendor in 1578. But it is a sufficiently extraordinary fact that the revolutionary Municipal Council of Cléry in 1793, while its colleagues all over France were dancing the Carmagnole round bonfires of revered images and relics, registered a resolution to move the Statue of Our Lady, *"qui eſt l'ancienne image exiſtant même avant l'église"* to the apse, during alterations to the choir and the provision of a new high altar.

Appendix B

THE ROSEBUSH OF WAR

In an article in the *Mercure de France* for August, 1925, M. Maurice Diamant-Berger published the fruits of new research into the long-disputed authorship of this celebrated treatise. His conclusion is that it is the joint work of Pierre Choisnet, the royal physician, and Louis XI himself; the political maxims supplied by Louis, the chronicles, abridged from the history of France, by Choisnet.

The *Rosier des Guerres* is divided formally into these two sections. M. Diamant-Berger shows further that it was compiled first of all for Louis, who, having given it his imprimatur, addressed an *édition de luxe* to his young son—the manuscript MS. Fr. 442 now in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris; a beautifully illuminated book containing an introductory letter, selected prayers for the Dauphin's use, and among these prayers selected maxims in relief. The King's letter to his son is unexpectedly tender, coming from such a man as Louis. "Since the good and virtuous counsel of wise men refreshes the spirit like sweet odors," he says, "and since We wish that when you, by God's grace, shall come to reign over and govern this noble Kingdom of France, you shall know and hold in your hands and within your heart what is very necessary to the good government of the same, I send you this *Rosebush* concerning the guarding and defense of the public weal (*la chose publique.*) Of which *Rosebush,* when you come to the age of flourishing youth, you must smell one rose every day, and thereby discover more delectation and comfort than in all the roses of the world, and perceive those of your predecessors who have acted most worthily."

The brief aphorisms which follow are sufficiently stamped with all the characteristics of Louis' mind to make M. Diamant-Berger's theory almost unanswerable. They are clear-cut and ringing, like bronze coin. Their strict economy, their exact knowledge of men and policy, their realism—all these marks point in one direction. Here are some specimens:

> "Take counsel of many when you have something to do; and when you have decided speak to few, and those loyal." [1]
>
> "Nature creates few strong men; but by good doctrine many men become stronger than by personal force." [2]
>
> "Discipline effects more in battle than courage." [3]
>
> "Good leaders never give battle without good reason or great necessity." [4]

Is there not, to students of the Renaissance, a familiar ring about these maxims? The *Rosier des Guerres* is not a book which is constantly quoted. Insensibly, without effort, the name of Machiavelli comes to mind. M. Diamant-Berger does more than summon Machiavelli; he sets down some thirty selected maxims from the *Rosier* with an equal number from Machiavelli's *Arte della Guerra,* which was written forty years later,

[1] *Prens conseil à plusieurs de ce quest à faire, et de ce que tu vouldras faire parle à peu de gens et loyaulx.*

[2] *Nature crée peu de fors hommes, mais par bonne doctrine plusieurs sont plus fors que par vertu corporelle.*

[3] *Coustume peult plus ayder en bataille que vertu.*

[4] *Les bons ducz si ne se combatent pas en bataille comme fors par aucune bonne achoisson ou par grande necessitaé.*

in 1521, and thereby brings to light the fact that not only is there in each case a similarity of thought, but that in many cases Machiavelli has used almost exactly the same words. For example:

> "Consult many on the resolution you have to take, but confide to a very small number of friends the resolution you have taken."
>
> "Nature makes few strong men; they are supplied us most often by education and exercise."
>
> "Discipline is better in war than impetuosity."
>
> "A good general never risks battle unless necessity forces him, or occasion calls."[5]

A charge of plagiarism against the subtle and too freely maligned Italian thinker and patriot would seem justified. He is thereby all the more in high and honorable company, with Shakespeare, and Molière, and many more of the world's great who have taken their treasure where they found it. M. Pierre Champion nevertheless holds that Machiavelli merely made use of a common source, the *De re militari* of Vegetius in the fourth century, A. D.

Pierre Choisnet, Louis' collaborator, was a Norman physician in close contact with the King, who entrusted him, as was his habit with familiars, with many missions. After the manner of his age Choisnet combined the practice of medicine with that of astrology, which in men of his devout and cultivated type was not the vulgar quackery with which it is so often synonymous throughout the centuries, but, so far as it can be, a science. That Louis should entrust him with the compilation of this manual of conduct *ad usum Delphini* is a proof of high esteem. The book is founded on the same principles as those on which the saintly Gerson, many years since, based the instruction of the child Louis XI: the duty to believe that a king is a man like other mortal men in the sight of his Creator; that the king exists only for the public weal; that his kingdom is a garden and he the gardener; that he should not make war without his people's consent; that—O golden truth, to which this very year 1929 bears witness!—war has never made any nation a penny the richer. When battle is to be given the enemy must be attacked boldly; but battle is the most uncertain and perilous thing in the world. As General Boulanger said in the nineties, *"La guerre, c'est une chose aléatoire"*—war is a chancy thing. Enormous truth, enormous as obvious.

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[5] Translated from the French, not the Italian—which, as M. Diamant-Berger observes, is probably still closer to the *Rosier*.

The further responsibilities of the king are to seek and enforce pure justice, to defend our Faith, to punish malefactors strictly, to have pity on the poor, to establish a mutual affection between the ruler and the ruled, to be wary of flattery, to be aware of everything pertaining to the kingdom's welfare; to seek peace, but to be found prepared for war if it be inevitable; to realize that the object of war, again, is peace; etc. Nearly all these last, no doubt, counsels of perfection, but forming a valuable copy-book for young princes. Charles VIII, when he attained his majority, found himself at the head of a prosperous and pacific France, with the best army in Europe; he therefore embarked on a campaign in Italy which ended in failure, (though the glory and booty were considerable) and only just managed to save his face. So much for a father's lessons.

Appendix C

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